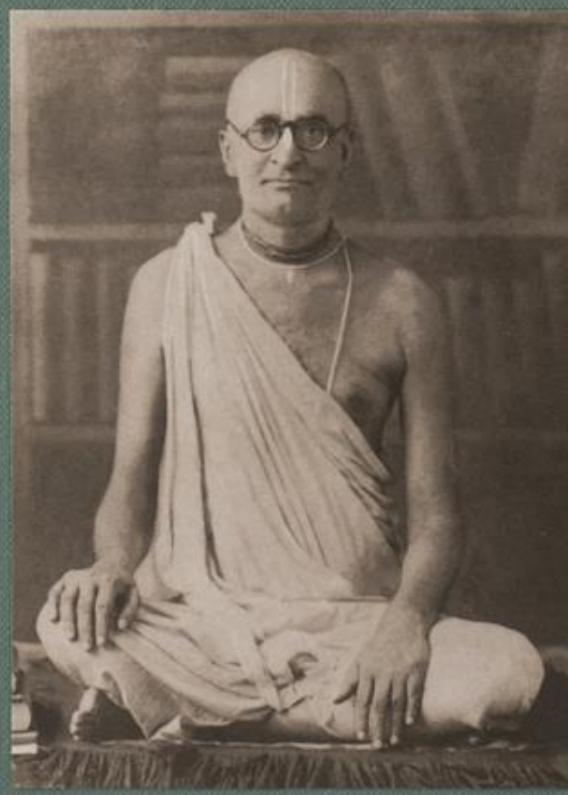


Of Love & Separation



Meditations on My Divine Master

HIS HOLINESS SWAMI B.P. PURI

Of Love and Separation

By His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Pramoda Puri Goswami Maharaja

Publish in 2001 year

This book includes, poems, essays, and teachings that capture the hearts of all aspiring spiritual practitioners. These meditations by Swami B. P. Puri, on his spiritual teacher Saraswati Thakur give a glimpse into the divine and profound relationship that these two masters shared.

Jagad Guru Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur

“He who is constantly showing us how to serve Godhead, throughout life, is no other than our Sri Guru.”

Srila Saccidananda Bhaktivinoda Thakur

“ . . . all kinds of superstitions and bad concepts are being called devotion . . . crush these anti-devotional conceptions by preaching pure devotion and by setting an example through your personal conduct.” — His divine orders to Srila Prabhupada.

Om Vishnupada Sri Srimad Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Maharaj “Service to the guru with affection and love is possible both in this world and in the next . . .

By serving his teachings when he is no longer visible to our mundane perception, we can receive a vision of his transcendental form.

Om Vishnupada Srila Bhakti Rakshaka Sridhardev Goswami Maharaj

“Prabhupada showed us by his ideal conduct how much earnestness one may have for Gurudeva. *Gurvvaika-nistha*—exclusive adherence to the service of Sri Guru. Bhaktivinoda Thakur was his very being. Everything was Bhaktivinoda Thakur.”

Preface

The root of all devotion is dedication to the guru. The path of pure devotion is one of absolute surrender and dependence on the divine guide, by whose grace one is enabled to overcome all personal deficiencies and obstacles and to ultimately attain the highest goal of life—love of Godhead. The guru is most dear to the Supreme Lord Himself and is thus His perfect representative. To bestow His mercy upon all those in the plight of conditioned existence, the Lord Himself sends His dear associate to this world. Thus the spiritual preceptor extends the grace of divinity by exhibiting the life of the devotee in his pure character and spiritual dealings, and also by expounding on sacred literatures for our enlightenment. He imparts the mantra and gives detailed instruction on the worship of the Divine Name. He is the protector, maintainer, and worshipable deity of the spiritual aspirant and all perfections ensue from sincerely following him. These points are all generally to be understood about the nature and role of guru. Through these doors of understanding, the devoted disciple finds infinite ground and infinite truth evolving out of his sacred relationship with his guru.

What is imparted in this collection of holy writings is the magic and divinity that is experienced through the real and untiring devotion of His Holiness Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Maharaj towards his eternal master, His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur. By reading, discussing, and remembering these wholly personal reflections we can cultivate the proper mood of dependence and loyalty to the instructions of the guru, so necessary for our own spiritual development. It is easily recognisable from the

words and example of Srila Puri Goswami Maharaj that he embraced a very exclusive and clearly defined line of devotion that he inherited from his spiritual preceptor, Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur. He continuously acknowledged the unique contribution and position Srila Prabhupada made to theistic thought over and over again in his writings. The very exalted path of rāga-bhakti, spontaneous loving devotion as expounded by Sri Chaitanya Deva and His immediate followers, was preserved and protected by the spiritual service of his guru.

Srila Prabhupada was, in fact, the empowered representative of Sriman Mahaprabhu. He was not a humanitarian, politician, or mundane religious worker in any right. He was a general in the cause of the Divine Will and staunchly defended our true self-interest against all our many diverted and relative conceptions. Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur established the desires of Sri Svarupa, Rupa, Sanatan, Raghunath and Thakur Bhaktivinoda. He distinctly set forth the proper understanding of sādhana-sādhyatattva—proper understanding of the means and end of all spiritual endeavor, such that we would not be misguided in the approach to service to the Divine Couple. Srila Prabhupada is the shelter and universal teacher for all those who accept the path of pure devotion in the wake of the followers of Sri Chaitanya. The invaluable gift that Srila Puri Goswami Maharaj had ventured to share in his expressions of devotion to his gurudeva and also in the hundreds of articles he wrote over a sixty year period are straightforward, realised, and caring instructions on the pure religion of the Bhagavata.

Those who are sincere will not be deceived nor disappointed when confronted with his teachings. Rather, they will rejoice in the uncompromising spirit of truth living in the words and example of Srila Puri Goswami Maharaj as he has dedicated his whole life to preserving the pure conceptions of devotion revealed by his worshipable gurudeva. The articles contained in this book first appeared in the monthly journal, Chaitanya Vāṇī, the mouthpiece of Sri Chaitanya Gaudiya Math.

They were composed by His Holiness Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Maharaj as intimate offerings to His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur on the occasion of his annual Vyasa Puja celebrations. An original Bengali edition was compiled and published in 1992 by His Grace Bhakti Nandan Swami Maharaj. In looking through the old editions of Chaitanya Vāṇī, we found several other poems that had not been included in the original Bengali edition. Since some of them contained valuable original material, we decided to produce an expanded edition. We did not feel it necessary to exhaustively edit the articles in such a way as to eliminate repetition and have decided to take each article as a meditation on the lotus feet of Srila

Prabhupada.

Thus, we have left them unchanged and given them in the same form that they first appeared in Chaitanya Vāṇī. We should garland ourselves with this collection of heartfelt prayers and inspiring glimpses into the divine life of Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur. If we take proper individual concern to examine our spiritual lives and practices—our worship of the Holy Name and the Divine Couple with the light of his instructions, and then share our successes with others, surely all fortune will descend upon us and the victory flag of Mahaprabhu's sankirtan will be erected for the benefit of all. We pray that by serving the readers and the Vaishnava community through preserving and sharing the teachings of Srila Puri Goswami Maharaj we will receive his unwarranted mercy and affection.

The Editor

Introduction

Over the years, I have made several attempts to set down in writing various aspects of the transcendental life of His Divine Grace, nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa Om Vishnupada Sri Srimad Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur, my most worshipable spiritual master. These articles appeared in Chaitanya Vāṇī, the monthly magazine of the Chaitanya Gaudiya Math, founded by my godbrother, the late reverend Tridandi sannyasi Sri Srimad Bhakti Dayita Madhava Goswami Maharaj. I wanted to add to this series of articles, but since I am now 94 years old, I see that such an ambition will have to remain unfulfilled unless Srila Prabhupada bestows upon me his special, causeless mercy. After Srila Prabhupada's disappearance, the editor of the weekly Gauḍīya magazine (who has now himself gone to the eternal abode) published a large number of valuable facts about Srila Prabhupada's life in *Sarasvatī-jaya-śrī*. Unfortunately, the article I composed for that volume was never published.

Our most worshipable Srila Prabhupada is most dear to Sri Krishna. His birth and activities are all transcendental and superhuman, like those of the Lord. So, in truth, they cannot be known by the foolish, but by the surrendered souls alone—mūḍhair avedyam praṇatābhigamyam. He reveals the secrets of his pastimes

to those who are sincerely surrendered to Krishna's lotus feet. Many fortunate devotees witnessed Srila Prabhupada's divine ecstasies as he spoke about Guru, Gauranga, Gandharvika and Giridhari. Upon seeing the tears filling his eyes and hearing the deep spiritual emotions trembling in his voice, the devotees themselves were barely able to hold back their own tears.

Srila Prabhupada was simultaneously harder than a thunderbolt and softer than a rose. He could not tolerate words that opposed or misrepresented the pure devotional doctrines taught by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and His dear associates, or those that misconstrued the proper portrayal of divine rasa (*rasābhāsa*). Throughout his life, he made an unflagging effort to establish consciousness in the jiva souls of their eternal nature as servants of Krishna. While speaking about Krishna, he would completely lose himself. Five books: Bhaktivinoda Thakur's *Śaraṇāgati*, *Kalyāṇa-kalpa-taru*, *Gītāvalī*, and Narottama's *Prārthanā* and *Prema-bhakti-candrikā*, were especially dear to Srila Prabhupada and he recited them daily. From childhood on, his life was a glowing example of determination to serve the Holy Names and to preach their glories. He was never able to tolerate the arrogance of those who followed the path of meditation on one's own spiritual form while showing indifference to the Holy Name.

Nor was he able to accept those who made an artificial effort to follow the path of *rāgānugā* bhakti while ignoring Mahaprabhu's instructions in the *Śikṣāṣṭaka* and those of Rupa Goswami in the *Upadeśāmrta*. After establishing in us the proper foundation, he then conceded to advise us to maintain our effort to attain the supreme goal of life—love for Sri Krishna in the elevated, effulgent sweet mood of Vraja distributed by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. He gave most precedence to Mahaprabhu's command, "In this age of Kali, the chanting of the Holy Names is the only means (*nāma-saṅkīrtana kalau parama upāya*)."

Srila Prabhupada was adorned by the four qualities mentioned in the *Śikṣāṣṭaka*'s *trṇād* api verse, and with these qualities he propagated the glories of the Holy Name. He constantly warned us, his disciples, that we should not try to steal from the storehouse of religious experience and also that false renunciation is inimical to spiritual advancement. Srila Prabhupada recommended appropriate renunciation or *yukta-vairāgya*.

*kanaka-kāminī pratiṣṭhā-bāghinī chāriyāche jāre se to vaisnava sei anāsakta sei
śuddha bhakta samsāra tathāya pāya parābhava*

A Vaishnava is one who has abandoned the tigress of desire for gold, women and worldly prestige. He is truly detached and thus a pure devotee. In him, the

bondage of samsara is overcome. (Vaiṣṇava ke?) Prabhupada considered material prestige to be detestable, comparing it to hog stool. He never sanctioned the impersonalist philosophy or devotion adulterated by jnana, yoga or karma, as these are in opposition to pure bhakti. He showed indomitable enthusiasm for preaching the Holy Name and Mahaprabhu's religion of love, from the oceans to the Himalaya Mountains and beyond. As a result, the fires of the sacrifice of the Holy Name were ignited and the victory flag of the Holy Name now waves in almost every corner of the world. So many thoughtful persons from the western countries have been fortunate to accept the spiritual ways of India.

Srila Prabhupada taught that every single living being is eligible to engage in the worship of the Lord. Everywhere he went, he loudly proclaimed that there is no consideration of ethnic background or race in devotional service. The essence of Srila Prabhupada's teachings is to sincerely take shelter of the genuine guru and make all efforts to engage in devotional service in the association of pure devotees. I myself heard Srila Prabhupada say to his disciples in regards to world peace that, "Genuine peace will never be established in this world without practicing and preaching the religion of love taught by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu."

When speaking about society's duty to educate its children, Prabhupada repeated the teachings of the great soul Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur,

jara-vidyā jata māyāra vaibhava tomāra bhajane bādhā moha janamiyā anitya samsāre jīvake karaye gādhā

"Material knowledge is the great power of the illusory energy and an impediment to pure devotional service. It creates an illusory attachment to samsara and turns a human being into an ass." We should therefore take shelter of the Holy Name, for transcendental knowledge (parā vidyā), the opposite of material knowledge, follows the Holy Name like a faithful wife. These are the words used by Mahaprabhu—vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam. In view of this, there is no need to attain any knowledge other than that which helps preach the glories of the Holy Name. We will never be able to remove the hatred, envy and enmity that exists between living beings unless we stop the use of human talents, science, arts, culture, commerce, ethics and religion as means for achieving sense gratification rather than for the highest goal of life. It is out of respect for his achievements in this domain that the pure devotee must be given the highest seat of honor in human society. May we follow the path established by Sri Vyasa and Sukadeva with all our being! Then only will we be able to achieve our true goal. If we disregard the scriptures that are based on the realizations of the great devotional authorities, the false and deceptive paths that we accept will lead us to take up all sorts of improper activities in the name of

religion. Prabhupada would therefore say:

pr̥thivīte jata kathā dharma-nāme cale bhāgavata kahe tāhā paripūrṇa chale

So many things on earth are promoted in the name of religion, but the Bhagavatam says that they are nothing more than deception. We pray that Srila Prabhupada's message of auspiciousness will be spread throughout the world. This will destroy the atheism that is so destructive to our planet and establish a genuine theism for the benefit of all humanity. This will bring peace and auspiciousness to all.

Aspiring for the lotus feet of Srila Prabhupada, Servant of the servant,

Sri Bhakti Promode Puri

Invocation

by His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Rakshaka Sridhara Maharaj

Sri-Prabhupada-Padma-Stavaka

A hymn to Srila Prabhupada's lotus feet by Sri Srimad Bhakti Rakshaka Sridhar Maharaj

**sujanarbuda-radhita-pada-yugam
yuga-dharma-dhurandhara-patra-varam
varadabhaya-dayaka-pujya-padam
pranamami sada prabhupada-padam**

His lotus feet are served in devotion by tens of thousands of highly virtuous souls; he is the establisher of the religion of the age (śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana) and the presiding monarch of the Visva Vaishnava Raja Sabha—the universal society of the pure devotees that are the true “kings” or guides of all; he fulfills the most cherished desires and dispels the fear of all souls. I constantly make my obeisance unto the radiance emanating from the toenails of the holy feet of my Lord, Srila Prabhupada, worshipable by one and all.

2

**bhajanorjita-sajjana-sangha-patim
patitadhika-karunikaika-gatim
gati-vancita-vancakacintya-padam
pranamami sada prabhupada-padam**

He is the leader of the fortunate souls blessed with the treasure of internal pure devotion; he is greatly merciful upon the fallen souls, being their only shelter and his holy feet are inconceivable to the deceivers who are thus deprived of spiritual beatitude. I constantly make my obeisance to the radiance emanating from the toenails of the holy feet of my Lord, Srila Prabhupada.

3

**ati-komala-kancana-dirgha-tanum
tanu-nindita-hema-mrinala-madam
madanarbuda-vandita-candra-padam
pranamami sada prabhupada-padam**

I make my obeisance unto his divine, charming yet commanding lofty form of golden hue. That beautiful figure shames the mad ecstasy of golden lotus stems. Venerated by tens of millions of Cupids, the moons of the toenails of my

worshipful Divine Master reveal the beauty of his lotus feet. I constantly make my obeisance unto the effulgence emanating from the toenails of the lotus feet of my Lord, Srila Prabhupada.

4

**nija-sevaka-taraka-ranji-vidhum
vidhutahita-hunkrita-simha-varam
varanagata-balisha-shanda-padam
pranamami sada prabhupada-padam**

Like the moon that delights the stars, he delights the circle of personal servitors who surround him; the sound of his thunderous lion's roar sets to flight all inauspiciousness; while the simple, inoffensive souls attain the ultimate peace by accepting his lotus feet. I constantly make my obeisance unto the effulgence emanating from the toenails of the lotus feet of my Lord, Srila Prabhupada.

5

**vipuli-krita-vaibhava-gaura-bhuvam
bhuvaneshu vikirtita-gaura-dayam
dayaniya-ganarpita-gaura-padam
pranamami sada prabhupada-padam**

He has expanded the glorious abundance of the land of Gaura's birth; he has broadcast the tidings of Sri Gauranga's supreme magnanimity throughout the whole universe; and in the hearts of the fit recipients of his grace, he has bestowed the gift of Sri Gaura's lotus feet. I constantly make my obeisance unto the effulgence emanating from the toenails of the lotus feet of my Lord, Srila

Prabhupada.

6

**cira-gaura-janashraya-vishva-gurum
guru-gaura-kishoraka-dasya-param
paramadrita-bhaktivinoda-padam
pranamami sada prabhupada-padam**

He is the long awaited shelter and Universal Guru for the souls surrendered unto Sri Gauranga; he is absorbed in the service of his Gurudeva, Sri Gaura Kishor Das Babaji; he wholeheartedly adores Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur. I perpetually make my obeisance unto the effulgence emanating from the toenails of the lotus feet of my Lord, Srila Prabhupada.

7

**raghu-rupa-sanatana-kirti-dharam
dharani-tala-kirtita-jiva-kavim
kaviraja-narottama-sakhya-padam
pranamami sada prabhupada-padam**

He is the illustrious personality who raises the flag that attests to the glory of Sri Rupa, Sri Sanatan, and Sri Raghunath Das; he sings the glories of the powerful personality of brilliant erudition, Sri Jiva, throughout the world; and he has won the renown of being one with the hearts of Srila Krishna Das Kaviraja Goswami and Narottama Das Thakur. I perpetually make my obeisance unto the effulgence emanating from the toenails of the lotus feet of my Lord, Srila Prabhupada.

**kripaya hari-kirtana-murti-dharam
dharani-bhara-haraka-gaura-janam
janakadhika-vatsala-snigdha-padam
pranamami sada prabhupada-padam**

Bestowing his grace upon all souls, he is Hari kirtan incarnate. As the associate of Sri Gaura, he relieves Mother Earth of the burden of offences committed upon her. He is so gracious that his loving warmth to all beings excels even that of a father. I perpetually make my obeisance unto the effulgence emanating from the toenails of the lotus feet of my Lord, Srila Prabhupada.

**sharanagata-kinkara-kalpa-tarum
taru-dhik-krita-dhira-vadanya-varam
varadendra-ganarcita-divya-padam
pranamami sada prabhupada-padam**

He is a wish-fulfilling tree for his surrendered servitors, fulfilling their heart's aspiration; even a tree is shamed by his magnanimity and forbearance. Even the gods who confer boons on all worship his lotus feet. I perpetually make my obeisance unto the effulgence emanating from the toenails of the lotus feet of my Lord, Srila Prabhupada.

**parahamsa-varam paramartha-patim
patitoddharane krita-vesha-yatim
yati-raja-ganaih parisevya-padam
pranamami sada prabhupada-padam**

He is the crown jewel of the paramahamsas, prince of the supreme perfection of life, Sri Krishna prema. He accepted the robes of a mendicant sannyasi just to deliver the fallen souls and is attended by the topmost tridaṇḍi-sannyāsis. I perpetually make my obeisance unto the effulgence emanating from the toenails of the lotus feet of my Lord, Srila Prabhupada.

11

**vrishabhanu-suta-dayitanucaram
caranashrita-renu-dharas tam aham
mahad-adbhuta-pavana-shakti-padam
pranamami sada prabhupada-padam**

He is the dearest, most intimate follower of the Divine Daughter of Vrishabhanu, and I know myself as most fortunate by taking the dust of his holy feet upon my head. I make my obeisance unto his invincible, wondrously purifying lotus feet; I perpetually make my obeisance unto the effulgence emanating from the toenails of the lotus feet of my Lord, Srila Prabhupada.

Sri-Dayita-Dasa-Pranati-Pancakam

Five prayers of obeisance to the servant of Radha's lover
by Sri Srimad Bhakti Rakshaka Sridhar Maharaj

**bhayabhanjana jayasamsana-karunayatanayanam
kanakotpala janakojvala-rasasagara-chayanam
mukharikrta-dharanitala-harikirtana-rasanam
ksitipavana-bhavatarana-pihitaruna-vasanam
subhadodaya-divase vrsaravija-nija-dayitam
pranamami cha charanantika-paricharaka-sahitam**

On the holy day of his advent, I bow down again and again unto that beloved associate of Sri Vrishabhanu Nandini and the servitors of his lotus feet. His large merciful eyes dispel the suffering souls' fear and proclaim the surrendered souls' victory; his divine form came forth from the birthplace of the golden lotus—the ocean of the mellow of divine consorthood; his tongue causes the whole Earth planet to constantly vibrate with Krishna sankirtan, and dressed in robes of the sun's radiance (saffron), he purifies the universe and dispels the suffering of material existence.

2

**saranagata-bhajanavrata-chirapalana-charanam
sukrtalaya-saralasaya-sujanakhila-varanam
harisadhana-krtabadhana janasasana-kalanam
sacharachara-karunakara-nikhilasiva-dalanam
subhadodaya-divase vrsaravija-nija-dayitam
pranamami cha charanantika-paricharaka-sahitam**

On the holy day of his advent, I bow down again and again unto that beloved associate of Sri Vrishabhanu Nandini and the servitors of his lotus feet. Devotees surrendered in pure devotion and fixed in the worship of the Lord are eternally protected at his lotus feet; he is worshipable by the pure souls endowed with sincerity and good fortune, and he accepts even those who obstruct the service of Sri Hari, just to rectify them. As the very fountainhead of mercy upon all mobile and immobile beings, he crushes the inauspiciousness of the whole universe.

3

**atilaukika-gatitaulika-ratikautuka-vapusam
atidaivata-mativaisnava-yati-vaibhava-purusam
sasanatana-raghurupaka-paramanugacharitam
suvicharaka iva jivaka iti sadhubhiruditam
subhadodaya-divase vrsaravija-nija-dayitam
pranamami cha charanantika-paricharaka-sahitam**

On the holy day of his advent, I bow down again and again unto that beloved associate of Sri Vrishabhanu Nandini and the servitors of his lotus feet. Like a miracle, his body moves with a joyful elegance and charm beyond the world's understanding, fulfilling the artist's aspiration. His intellect surpasses that of even the demigods, and he is nobility incarnate as the commander-in-chief of the Vaishnava sannyasis. The sadhus of profound intellect describe the nature of his personality as meticulously in the line of Sri Sanatan, Sri Rupa and Sri Raghunath, and they speak of him as being superbly replete in perfect theistic conclusions like Sri Jiva Goswami.

**sarasitata-sukhadotaja-nikatapriyabhajanam
lalitamukha-lalanakula-paramadarayajanam
vrajakana-bahumanana-kamalapriyanayanam
gunamanjari-garima-guna-harivasanavayanam
subhadodaya-divase vrsaravija-nija-dayitam
pranamami cha charanantika-paricharaka-sahitam**

On the holy day of his advent, I bow down again and again unto that beloved associate of Sri Vrishabhanu Nandini and the servitors of his lotus feet. On the bank of Sri Radha Kund at Svananda Sukhada Kunja, he is devoted to the service of his Beloved, and furthermore, he is greatly endeared to the divine damsels of Vraja headed by Lalita. He is most favored by Kamala Manjari, who is pre-eminent in Vrindavan, and weaves the cloth of Sri Hari's desires with the glorious qualities of Guna Manjari.

**patitoddhrti-karunastrti-krtanutana-pulinam
mathurapura-purusottama-samagaurapuratanam
harikamaka-haridhamaka-harinamaka-ratanam
subhadodaya-divase vrsaravija-nija-dayitam
pranamami cha charanantika-paricharaka-sahitam**

On the holy day of his advent, I bow down again and again unto that beloved associate of Sri Vrishabhanu Nandini and the servitors of his lotus feet. He appeared on the day of Vimala Devi's festival in Purushottam Kshetra in the holy land of Orissa, and he revealed his pastimes of delivering the fallen souls and extending his mercy upon them by awarding them the gift of divine love at the new isles (Nabadwip). Circumambulating Gaura Dham in the same way as traditionally done at Vraja Dham and Purushottam Dham, he continuously propagated the loving desires of Vraja, the divine abode of Vaikuntha and the holy name of Krishna.

Sri-Sri-Dayita-Dasa-Dasakam

“Ten verses of praise to the servant of Radha’s lover”

by Sri Srimad Bhakti Rakshaka Sridhar Maharaj

1

**nite yasmin nisante nayana-jala-bharaih snata-gatrarvvudanam
uchchair utkrosatam sri-vrsakapi-sutayadhiraya sviya-gosthim
prthvi gadhandhakarair hrta-nayana-manivavrta yena hina
yatrasau tatra sighram krpana-nayana he niyatam kinkaro 'yam**

When the impatient daughter of Vrishabhanu suddenly took him into Her entourage at the end of that night, thousands of us let loose a great cry of lamentation and we bathed our bodies in tears. When he was thus stolen away, this world was plunged into deep darkness, as though the jewel of its eyes had fled away.¹ O my tear-filled eyes (kr̥paṇa-nayana)! [or, “O you who show the way to the most fallen (kr̥paṇa-nayana)!”] Please quickly lead this servitor to wherever that great soul may be!

2

**yasya sri-pada-padmat pravahati jagati prema-piyusa-dhara
yasya sri-pada-padma-chyuta-madhu satatam bhrtya-bhrngan vibhartti
yasya sri-pada-padmam vraja-rasika-jano modate samprasasya
yatrasau tatra sighram krpana-nayana he niyatam kinkaro 'yam 1[1]**

From his lotus feet, the nectarean river of divine love flows throughout the universe; the honey from his lotus feet maintains the lives of his bee-like servitors; and the pure devotees in the shelter of the confidential mellows of Vraja revel in the bliss of singing the glories of his lotus feet. O kr̄paṇa-nayana! Please quickly lead this servitor to wherever that great soul may be!

3

**vatsalyam yach cha pitro jagati bahumatam kaitavam kevalam tat
dampatyam dasyutaiva svajana-gana-krtā bandhuta vanchaneti
vaikuntha-sneha-murteh pada-nakha-kiranair yasya sandarsito 'smi
yatrasau tatra sighram krpana-nayana he niyatam kinkaro 'yam**

Parental affection, so highly esteemed in the world, is a colossal hoax (for it is an obstacle to Hari-bhakti); socially recognized pure matrimonial love is nothing but dacoity (in that it plunders away both the husband's and the wife's eagerness for the chance to acquire the treasure of love unadulterated by superficial family prejudices); and common friendship is merely deception: I have gleaned these thoughts from the rays of light that emanate from the toenails of the holy feet of that great personality, the embodiment of supramundane affection. O kr̄paṇa-nayana! Please quickly lead this servitor to wherever that great soul may be!

4

**ya vani kantha-lagna vilasati satatam krsna-chaitanyachandre
karna-krodaj-jananam kim u nayana-gatam saiva murtim prakasya
niladri-sasya netrarpana-bhavana-gata netra-tarabhidheya
yatrasau tatra sighram krpana-nayana he niyatam kinkaro 'yam**

The divine message sung by Sri Krishna Chaitanya had its continuous play in the ears of the people. Has that message taken a form and to make itself visible to the eyes of the world, advented in a house within the sight of Jagannath, the Lord of Nilachala, just to fulfill the purport of the name “Nayana-mani”? O krpaña-nayana! Please quickly lead this servitor to wherever that great soul may be!

5

**gaurendor asta-saile kim u kanaka-ghano hema-hrj-jambu-nadya
avirbhutah pravarsair nikhila-jana-padam plavayan dava-dagdham
gauravirbhava-bhumau rajasi cha sahasa samjugopa svayam svam
yatrasau tatra sighram krpana-nayana he niyatam kinkaro 'yam**

Drawing up the pure golden waters of the Jambu River mentioned in Srimad Bhagavatam, has this golden cloud arisen on the mountain where the golden moon (Sri Gaurachandra) set, just to shower down torrents of rain upon a world scorched by the forest fire of threefold sufferings? And has he now suddenly concealed himself again in the dust of the land where Sri Gauranga appeared? O krpaña-nayana! Please quickly lead this servitor to wherever that great soul may be!

6

**gauro gaurasya sisyo gurur api jagatam gayatam gaura-gatha
gaude gaudiya-gosthy-asrita-gana-garima dravide gaura-garvi
gandharva gaura-vatyo giri-dhara-parama-preyasam yo garistho
yatrasau tatra sighram krpana-nayana he niyatam kinkaro 'yam**

He is of the same hue as Sri Gaura, and although he, who sings the tidings of Sri Gaura, is the natural guru of the whole universe, he became a disciple of the

great devotee named Sri Gaura Kishor. In Gauda-mandala, he is the pride of those who grant entrance into the fold of pure Gaudiya Vaishnavism, while in South India, he is the proud representative of Gaura. The glory of his dignity shines even in the group of Sri Gandharva, and he holds a pre-eminent position in the intimate circle of Sri Giridhari, that is, he is the most beloved of Lord Mukunda. O kṛpaṇa-nayana! Please quickly lead this servitor to wherever that great soul may be!

7

**yo radha-krsna-namamrta-jala-nidhinaplavayad-visvam etad
amlechchhasesa-lokam dvija-nrpa-vanijam sudra-sudrapakrstam
muktaih siddhair agamyah patita-jana-sakho gaura-karunya-saktir
yatrasau tatra sighram krpana-nayana he niyatam kinkaro 'yam**

He inundated the whole universe of countless living beings—whether brahmin, kshatriya, vaishya, shudra, less than shudra or even mleccha—with the oceanic nectar of the holy names of Sri Sri Radha and Krishna. Although unapproachable by the liberationists and the yogic perfectionists, he is known as the friend of the fallen, the mercy potency of Sri Gauranga. O kṛpaṇa-nayana! Please quickly lead this servitor to wherever that great soul may be!

8

**apy asa varttate tat purata-vara-vapur lokitum loka-sandam
dirgham nilabja-netram tila-kusuma-nasam ninditarddhendu-bhalam
saumyam subhramsu-dantam sata dala-vadanam dirgha-bahum varenyam
yatrasau tatra sighram krpana-nayana he niyatam kinkaro 'yam**

Do I have a hope to ever see that beautiful golden personality who makes everything auspicious for the world? Do I have a hope to ever behold that tall figure once again, those blue lotus eyes, that nose shaped like a sesame flower, the forehead that shames the half moon, the graceful lotus face, gleaming pearl-white teeth, and long arms extending to his knees? O kṛpaṇa-nayana! Please

quickly lead this servitor to wherever that great soul may be!

9

**gaurabde sunya-bananvita-nigamamite krsna-pakse chaturthyam
pause mase maghayam amara-gana-guror-vasare vai nisante
daso yo radhikaya atisaya-dayito nitya-lila-pravisto
yatrasau tatra sighram krpana-nayana he niyatam kinkaro 'yam**

In the year 450 of the era of our Lord Gauranga, in the month of Paush, on the fourth day of the dark fortnight of the moon in the star of Magh, at the closing of Thursday night,² that most beloved attendant of Srimati Vrishabhanu Nandini entered into the eternal pastimes. O kṛpaṇa-nayana! Please quickly lead this servitor to wherever that great soul may be!

10

**ha-ha-karair-jananam guru-charana-jusam puritabhur-nabhas cha
yato 'sau kutra visvam prabhupada-virahad-dhanta sunyayitam me
padabje nitya-bhṛtyah ksanam api viraham notsahe sodhum atra
yatrasau tatra sighram krpana-nayana he niyatam kinkaro 'yam**

The entire earth and skies were filled with the cries of anguish of the disciples devoted to the service of Sri Gurudeva's lotus feet. Where has that Great Master gone? Alas! In separation from my Lord's lotus feet, the whole universe seems empty to me. An eternal servant of the spiritual master cannot endure his separation for even a moment. O kṛpaṇa-nayana! Please quickly lead this servitor to wherever that great soul may be!

Offerings of Love & Separation

by His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami

Prabhupada's Divine Appearance

Mahaprabhu could not tolerate hearing anything that contradicted the pure spirit of devotion. For this reason, He always had Svarupa Damodar read everything before He Himself listened to it. For the very same reason, He arranged for Bhaktivinoda Thakur to take responsibility for the Jagannath temple in Puri for a period of five years (1871-1875). It was during this time that Srila Prabhupada took birth. In the Bhagavad Gita (4.9), the Supreme Lord describes His own birth and activities while in the world as divine or divya. Both Ramanujacharya and Madhusudana Saraswati have commented on this word, defining it as "transcendental" (*aprākṛta*). Sridhar Swami uses the word alaukika, or "supramundane," while Visvanath Chakravarti holds that the two words ultimately mean the same thing. The worlds (*loka*) are created by nature (*prakṛti*); therefore something that is "not of this world" (alaukika), is then "beyond nature" or transcendental (*aprākṛta*). Thus, the essence of the Lord's words is that His birth and activities are to be understood as being beyond the qualities or modes of material nature; as such, it is self-evident that they are eternal in nature. In the *Puruṣa-bodhinī Upaniṣad*, the following verse is found:

eko devo nitya-līlānurakto bhakta-vyāpī bhakta-hṛdy antarātmā

"There is one Supreme Lord who is engaged in eternal pastimes. He pervades the hearts of His devotees as their innermost self." The word *nitya* or eternal appears frequently in the *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmrta*.

Therefore, just as the appearance and activities of the Supreme Lord are divine, transcendental, supramundane and eternal, so too are the appearance and activities of the Lord's manifest representative, the spiritual master.

Bhaktivinoda Thakur decided to name his son Bimala Prasad (Vimalā-prasāda) after the goddess Bimala, Lord Jagannath's divine energy or Yogamaya potency. The word *prasāda* means mercy or blessing. Without Her mercy, it is impossible for anyone to enter into His holy dham or into the mysteries of His pastimes along with His name, form, qualities, associates and their special characteristics. Srila Prabhupada was the incarnation of that mercy. In his *Kalyāṇa-kalpa-taru*, Bhaktivinoda Thakur submits the following prayer to Yogamaya:

āmāra samāna hīna nāhi e samsāre asthira hayechi pari bhava-pārāvāre

“No one in this world is as lowly as myself. I am greatly disturbed at having fallen into this great ocean of matter.

kula-devī yogamāyā more kṛpā kari āvaraṇa samvaribe kae viśvodarī

“Yogamaya, you have been my family’s worshipable deity for generations. You hold this entire universe in your belly; please remove the illusion that covers me.

śunechi āgame vede mahimā tomāra śrī-kṛṣṇa-vimukhe bāñdhi karāo samsāra

“I have heard your glories in the Tantras and the Vedas. I have also heard there that you create the material world by turning us away from Krishna and binding us.

śrī-kṛṣṇa sammukhya jāra bhāgya-krame haya tānre mukti diyā kara aśoka abhaya

“You grant liberation to those who through some great fortune turn toward Krishna, making them fearless and free from lamentation.

e dāse janani kari akaitava dayā vrindāvane deha sthāna tumi yogamāyā

“O Mother! Give me, your servant, your unadulterated blessings. Give me a place in Vrindavan, where you are present as Yogamaya.

tomāke lanḍhiyā kothā jīve kṛṣṇa pāya kṛṣṇa rāsa prakaṭila tomāra kṛpāya

“What living being can attain Krishna by ignoring you? You are the one who made the rāsa-līlā possible.

tumi kṛṣṇa-sahacarī jagata-jananī tumi dekhāile more kṛṣṇa-cintāmanī

“You are both the mother of the universe and Krishna’s close companion. You are the one who has shown me Krishna’s spiritual world.

niṣkapaṭa haye mātā cāo mora pane vaiṣṇave viśvāsa vriddhi hauk pratikṣaṇe

“Mother, be direct with me. Look to me and give me increased faith in the Vaishnavas at every moment.

vaiṣṇava-carāṇa vinā bhava-pārāvāra bhaktivinoda nāre haibāre pāra

“Bhaktivinoda cannot cross over the material ocean without the blessings of the devotees.” In the Nārada-pañcarātra, in the course of the conversations between

the personified Upanishads and Vidya Devi, the following verse is found:

*ekeyam prema-sarvasvasvabhāvā gokuleśvarī
asyā āvarikā śaktir mahāmāyākhileśvarī*

“Anāmśā is the name of the mistress of Gokula. She is unique and Her nature is to be full of divine love. The potency that covers Her and is mistress of the entire material world is called Mahamaya. Yogamaya is beyond the three qualities of matter, while Mahamaya is the mistress of these three qualities.” The Supreme Lord is the master of His energy, known as Maya. Maya is of two types: She either enchants those who turn toward Krishna or bewilders those who have turned away from Him. As the enchantress of the devotees, She is the goddess of Gokula; She is Krishna’s spiritual energy or cic-chakti and is known as Yogamaya. Her partial expansion is the material energy, which bewilders those reluctant to serve the Lord. She is also known as Mahamaya and She is the goddess of the limitless material worlds.

*viṣṇor māyā bhagavatī yayā sammohitam jagat
ādiṣṭhāḥ prabhuṇāṁśena kāryārthe sambhavisyati*

“The Lord’s own potency, the goddess Vishnumaya, enchants both the material and spiritual universes. She has been requested by the Lord to appear with Her partial expansion, the external energy Mahamaya, in order to execute some specific tasks for Him.” (SB 10.1.25) The specific tasks of Maya referred to are explained as follows: As the internal potency, Yogamaya, she was to transfer Devaki’s seventh fetus from her womb to that of Rohini. She also placed Yashoda under a spell of deep sleep so that Vasudeva could bring the baby Krishna to her for protection from Kamsa. At the same time, the bewildering potency of Mahamaya kept Kamsa and his henchmen under the spell of ignorance, unable to find or recognize Krishna for who He was. In the Gita (7.25), Krishna says that He is not visible to everyone because He is hidden by His Yogamaya potency (*nāham prakāśah sarvasya yogamāyā-samāvṛtaḥ*). Baladeva Vidyabhushan explains the usage of the word *yogamāyā* here as in fact meaning the external energy. The word *yoga* in this case refers to the yogic power of bewildering the non-devotees. The Supreme Lord is always visible to His devotees whose eyes are smeared with the unguent of love, while remaining hidden to those who have no interest in Him. Krishna is brilliant like the sun; there is not a single thing or person that has the power to conceal Him. The sun is more than a million times larger than the earth, so how can a tiny cloud cover the sun? It is our perception of the sun that is disrupted by the presence of the cloud, but we say that the cloud has covered it. Similarly, it is our vision of Krishna that is affected by the cloud of His illusory potency and keeps us unable

to see or serve Him. For this reason, the Supreme Lord Himself, the object of everyone's service, appears as the guru, the exemplary servant—*guru-rūpe kṛṣṇa kṛpā karena bhakti gaṇe*. The spiritual master is the embodiment of the Supreme Lord's compassionate energy. By his own exemplary character, the spiritual master establishes the appropriate devotional behavior in others. The same was said of Mahaprabhu:

āpani ācari dharma jīvere śikhāya āpane nā kaile dharma śikhāno nā jāya

“The Lord practiced the religion of devotion and taught it to others, for unless one practices religious principles oneself, he cannot instill them in others.” By taking shelter of the spiritual master, accepting his directions and worshiping Lord Krishna, through his blessings one becomes free from the coverings of Maya and capable of receiving the blessings of Krishna Himself.

tāte kṛṣṇa bhaje kare gurura sevana māyā-jāla chute pāya kṛṣṇera carana

“Upon receiving direction from the spiritual master] the disciple worships Krishna and serves his spiritual master. As a result, he escapes the power of Maya and attains Krishna's lotus feet.” The conditioned soul is forgetful of Krishna. Out of compassion for the conditioned souls, the Lord reveals Himself in scriptures like the Vedas and Puranas. He furthermore appears as the great devotee, spiritual master or siksha guru in order to explain the meaning of the scriptures. The Lord furthermore manifests as the interior guru or caithya-guru by which He gives the aspiring devotee the intelligence to understand the meaning of the scriptures.

It is thus stated in Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.23):

*yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā deve tathā gurau
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ prakāśante mahātmanah*

“The inner meaning of the Upanishadic teachings are revealed to the great soul who has great devotion for the Lord, and in equal measure for the spiritual master.” Whatever spiritual practice we engage in must have the spiritual master at its center. Narottama Das Thakur sang the following:

ki rūpe pāiba sevā mui durācāra śrī-guru-vaiṣṇave rati nā hala āmāra

“How will an evil person like myself ever attain service to the Divine Couple? I have never felt the slightest attachment for my spiritual master or the Vaishnavas.”

(Prārthanā) *śrī-guru-carana-padma kevala bhakati-sadma vandoñ mui
sābadhāna mate jāñhāra prasāde bhāi e bhava tariyā jāi kṛṣṇa-prāpti haya
jāhān haite*

“I worship the spiritual master’s lotus feet, the abode of exclusive devotion, with great care and attention. O brother, by his mercy one can cross over this conditioned existence and attain the lotus feet of Sri Krishna.”

*guru-mukha-padma-vākyā cittete kariyā aikya āra nā kariha mane āśā
śrī guru caraṇe rati, ei se uttama gati je prasāde pūre sarva āśā*

“Fix your mind on the words emanating from the lotus mouth of the spiritual master. Place your hopes in nothing else. Attachment for the lotus feet of Sri Guru is the ultimate goal, for by his mercy all of one’s aspirations are realized.”

*cakṣu-dāna dila jei janme janme prabhu sei divya-jñāna hrde prakāśita prema
bhakti jāñhā haite avidyā-vināśa jāte vede gāya jāñhāra carita*

“The one who gave me eyes to see is my master, birth after birth. By his grace, the light of divine knowledge illuminates my heart. From him comes ecstatic love for Krishna; from him, ignorance is destroyed and so the scriptures glorify his deeds.”

*śrī-guru-karuṇā-sindhu adhama-janāra bandhu lokanātha lokera jīvana hā hā
prabho kara dayā deha more pada-chāyā ebe jaśa ghusuk tribhuvana*

“The spiritual master is the ocean of compassion, the friend of the lowly. He is the lord and life of the worlds. O Master! Be merciful and give me shelter in the shade of your lotus feet. May your glories be sung throughout the universe.”

(Narottama Das, *Prema-bhakti-candrikā*) Visvanath Chakravarti has also written :

yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto’pi

“By the spiritual master’s mercy, one receives the blessings of the Lord. Without his mercy, one has no hope of perfection.” (Gurvaṣṭaka, 8) Thakur Bhaktivinoda is the best of the followers of Svarupa Damodar and Rupa Goswami. He recognized that my spiritual master, Srila Prabhupada, had taken birth in the land of Purushottam, Jagannath Puri, where the Supreme Lord Himself had come to relish the taste of love in separation, in order to fulfill His divine will. He thus recognized his appearance to be the manifestation of the blessings of Jagannath Deva’s personal energy, Bimala Devi, who was acting to enrich the Lord’s own

pastimes and so named him Bimala Prasad. It is impossible for anyone to preach the divine abode, name, form, activities and glories of the Supreme Lord without the direct blessings of His internal potency, Yogamaya—*kṛṣṇa-śakti vinā nahe tāra pravartana*. In his later life, Srila Prabhupada took on other names (Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati and Varshabhanavidayita Das) that were reflected in his virtues and activities. Tridaṇḍi-sannyāsa^[2] is an ancient institution amongst Vaishnavas, but it had no currency in Bengal at the time of Srila Prabhupada’s appearance. It is mentioned in many scriptures, including Manu-saṁhitā (12.10-11), Hārīta-saṁhitā (6.23), Padma-purāṇa, Skanda-purāṇa, Jābāla Upaniṣad and Muktikā Upaniṣad. In the eleventh canto of the Bhagavatam, the activities of a monk with a triple staff (tridaṇḍa) from Avantipur are described extensively. The famous commentator on the Bhagavatam, Sridhar Swami, has mentioned tridaṇḍi-sannyāsa twice in his Bhāvārtha-dīpikā (at 10.86.3 and 11.18.28), showing particular respect for the institution by saying *pūjyatamāṁ tridaṇḍi-veṣam*—“the office of the triple-staffed monk is most venerable.” Amongst the followers of Ramanujacharya, the institution of *tridaṇḍi-sannyāsa* is still maintained to this day. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu followed the local customs of the time by accepting the sannyas of the Mayavadis, known as *eka-dāṇḍi-sannyāsa* because of the single staff that these monks carry. Despite this external act, however, the Lord showed that He internally considered himself to be a monk of the *tridaṇḍī* school.

prabhu kahe sādhu ei bhiksuka-vacana mukunda-sevana-vrata kaila nirdhāraṇa parātma-niṣṭhā mātra veṣa dhāraṇa mukunda-sevāya haya samsāra tāraṇa sei veṣa kaila ebe vrindāvana giyā kṛṣṇa niṣevāna kari nibhṛte basiyā

The Lord said, “I approve of the words of this monk from Avanti (SB 11.25.37), for he has indicated that sannyas is a commitment to the service of Mukunda, who alone grants liberation. The meaning of renunciation is simply to show that by commitment to the service of the Supreme Soul, Lord Mukunda, one crosses over the material ocean. Now that I have taken the dress of a monk, I shall go to Vrindavan where I can sit alone somewhere and engage in Lord Krishna’s service.” (Chaitanya Charitamrita, 2.3.7-9) There is a Sanskrit saying that one does not become a true renunciate by simply carrying a bamboo staff (*venubhir na bhaved yatiḥ*): one has to exercise control over the body, mind and words, engaging all these faculties in the service of the Lord. This is the meaning of the triple staff. This is why Nityananda Prabhu broke Mahaprabhu’s staff into three pieces in order to demonstrate that His sannyas meant such a threefold commitment to Krishna’s service. The meaning of the monastic order is a commitment to attaining the Supreme Soul; the only duty of the renunciate is to serve Lord Mukunda. A monk who does not take the vow of service is simply engaged in fraud and self-deception. Srila Prabhupada set the example of

engaging in the Lord's service for each and every one of the twenty-four hours in a day. By so doing, he gave a living example of what is meant by tridaṇḍi-sannyāsa. As a small boy, Srila Prabhupada did not show the typical childish enthusiasm for playing and sports. He considered it all to be a waste of time. His taste for worshiping the Lord and chanting His name was entirely natural. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur gave Prabhupada his blessings to go and live in Mayapur in a place called Baraja-pota. Srila Prabhupada renamed the place Vraja-pattana and later established Chaitanya Math there. He lived there following a strict celibate lifestyle, exemplifying the dutiful behavior of a sadhaka by taking the vows of Chaturmasya and chanting one billion Holy Names. During this time, he also wrote commentaries on Chaitanya Charitamrita, Srimad Bhagavatam, Srila Rupa Goswami's Upadeśāmṛta and Mahaprabhu's Śikṣāṣṭaka, as well as his book describing the relative positions of the Vaishnava and the brahmin. This work made him the object of Mahaprabhu and Bhaktivinoda Thakur's undying affection. Nevertheless, Srila Prabhupada said that his main mission in life was to preach the books and message of Bhaktivinoda Thakur. He considered Bhaktivinoda to be the manifest representative of Srimati Radharani. He had a saying, bābā bādhā rādhā, which means "thinking of him as a father is an obstacle to attaining Radharani." Throughout his career, Srila Prabhupada nearly always named the deities he installed in his temples vinoda, such as Vinodānanda, Vinoda-prāṇa, etc. The Thakur also showed his particular affection for Srila Prabhupada when he wrote:

sarasvatī kṛṣṇa-priyā kṛṣṇa-bhakti tāra hiyā vinodera sei se vaibhava

"Saraswati is dear to Krishna; his heart is filled with devotion for Krishna. He is the manifestation of Bhaktivinoda's opulence." Srila Prabhupada established temples and mathas throughout India as centers for preaching the pure devotional service taught by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Nevertheless, he often said that he hadn't taken birth to become a bricklayer or carpenter. The goal was not to simply build temples and install deities in order to make a living—eating, sleeping and pleasing one's own senses. The residents of the mathas must engage in the pure devotional lifestyle and try to spread the teachings in order to please the Lord, the guru and the Vaishnavas. Mahaprabhu told us to make our lives successful and to do good for others. No one can do good for others without leading an exemplary life himself. If the temples serve as centers for people who are leading this exemplary lifestyle and preaching Mahaprabhu's message and initiating others, then the whole world will benefit immensely. Prabhupada made every effort to see that preaching went on in as much of India as possible. To this end he had books and magazines published in various different languages. To make a business of selling books is not helpful for one's spiritual life. It is the same as making a business out of giving initiation or selling mantras and the Holy Name. Prabhupada especially detested this kind of

behavior for the scriptures condemn teaching the scriptures in order to make money. He used every means possible, whether books, slide shows, or dioramas, to interest people in the devotional message. Though the most merciful Srila Prabhupada was born in the holy land of Bharata, he sought to establish pure devotional service and spread it throughout the world. During his own lifetime, he sent disciples to Europe on two different occasions, despite knowing that these countries are completely lacking in any strict principles of behavior or *sadācāra*, in the hope that they would be able to raise the victory flag of the Holy Name. From that time Mahaprabhu's name began to be heard in the West and finally, after Srila Prabhupada's departure, another most worthy disciple took up the mission and the entire western world was filled with the sounds of the Holy Name and the pure doctrines taught by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. All of Prabhupada's disciples are overjoyed to see learned people from all over the world inquiring about the truth of spiritual life in this way.

On March 24, 1980, the cornerstone for a new temple was laid in the house in Jagannath Puri where Srila Prabhupada was born. While the foundations were being dug, the devotees were overjoyed at seeing the pure earth with the fragrance of sandalwood incense. Just as Prabhupada was self-manifest, his birthplace is similarly so. Though many obstacles had to be overcome in order to make this temple a possibility, Prabhupada's dear disciple Srimad Bhakti Dayita Madhava Goswami Maharaja, out of his compassion for the devotees, agreed to accept the service and undertook the efforts to restore the holy site. Now Sri Mahaprabhu and Jagannath Deva, Himself in another form, have manifested a beautiful skyscraping temple over the site of Their dear devotee's appearance. Through their blessings and the inspiration given by Srila Prabhupada himself, a powerful desire to do this work manifested in the heart of Prabhupada's intimate associate, Srila Madhava Goswami Maharaja. He had to overcome numerous difficulties to achieve this work, but now deities have been consecrated and their service is being carried out in this temple. He had a two-story building constructed to house the devotees before he himself went to join his spiritual master in the eternal abode. His disciples sought to fulfill his desires and the Supreme Lord also arranged for the beautiful temple to be built where He and His manifest representative, Srila Prabhupada, could be worshiped. This took place on February 5, 1982, on the holy advent anniversary of Srila Prabhupada. All glories to Lord Jagannath, the caretaker of His devotees! All glories to the Lord of the Gambhira, who has taken the mood and bodily hue of the daughter of Vrishabhanu! All glories to Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the Lord of Svarupa, Rupa, Raghunath and Varshabhanavi-dayita Das! All glories to the divine abode of Purushottam Dham! All glories to the devotees of the Dham! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and all his disciples! All glories to his divine birth, his divine works and his divine birthplace!

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My Most Worshipable Srila Prabhupada

By *utkale puruṣottamāt*. This prophecy by Vyasaadeva recorded in the Padma-purāṇa indicates that the eternal, divine message was to be broadcast out of the land of Utkala, or Orissa, by which is specifically meant the city of Jagannath Puri, and from there spread throughout the world. To bring this prophecy to fruition, Sri Krishna's eternal associate and external manifestation—His prakāśa-vigraha, my most worshipable spiritual master, Jagad-guru Aṣṭottara-śata-śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur, appeared in the midst of an ecstatic kirtan at 3:30 in the afternoon on Friday, February 6, 1871. His place of birth was Narayan Chata, the home of Lord Krishna's eternal associate Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur, on the Grand Road not far from the main Jagannath temple. After a life dedicated to preaching the religion of love taught and practiced by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, he ended his sojourn in this world on Thursday, January 1, 1937 at 5:30 in the morning. With his mind fixed on the lotus feet of Sri Sri Radha-Govinda, he entered the daily cycle of Their eternal pastimes just as They were awakening in each other's arms.^{1[3]} All of the unique features of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's pastimes were fully revealed in Puri Dham. This is why the incarnation of Gauranga's mercy, Srila Prabhupada, decided to begin his worldly pastimes in that holy place. Puri remained very dear to Srila Prabhupada's heart throughout his life. His last visit to Puri took place not long before his disappearance. In fact, he left Sri Purushottam Math on the ocean beach in Puri on the morning of December 7, 1936—just twenty-four days prior to his disappearance. From Jagannath Puri, Srila Prabhupada went to the Calcutta Bagh Bazaar Math. There, on December 23, in front of an audience of devotees, Prabhupada gave some important instructions to his initiated disciples about how to maintain their spiritual lives after his departure. On the very morning that he disappeared from this world, he ordered some of them to sing several bhajans, including Narottama Das's Śrī-Rūpa-Manjari-pada and Bhaktivinoda Thakur's translation of the second verse of Śikṣāṣṭaka:

tuhuṁ dayā-sāgara tārayite prāṇī, nāma aneka tuwā śikhāoāli āni

(“You are the ocean of mercy, and so You came to reveal Your numerous holy names to deliver the living beings,” from *Gītāvalī*). On hearing these songs, Srila Prabhupada commented, “Thakur Narottama brought Rupa and Raghunath's message to Bengal. It is therefore best for us to follow his

teachings.” With these words, he reiterated the instructions he had given his disciples on December 23, underlining their importance. Although Srila Prabhupada showed special mercy to certain of his disciples on that occasion by mentioning their names, in fact his blessings extended to every single one of them without exception, wherever they happened to be at that time. He said, “All of you should know that I give you my blessings, whether you are present here today or far away. Just remember that our only religious duty is to preach the message of the Bhagavata and service to the Lord.” In the Chaitanya Charitamrita, it is written that the most important instructions are the last ones—*avaśeṣa ājñā balavān* (CC 2.22.59). In keeping with this directive, we should repeatedly examine Srila Prabhupada’s final instructions and make them the guiding principles of our lives, for they contain the essence of his teachings: “All of you please preach the message of Rupa and Raghunath with great enthusiasm. The ultimate object of our desires is to become particles of dust at the lotus feet of the followers of Rupa Goswami. “Our true being and identity is to be the dust at the lotus feet of Sri Rupa Prabhu, life after life. The channel that flows from Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur can never be obstructed. Remember this and vow to double your efforts to fulfill Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur’s desires. Amongst you are many capable and worthy individuals. We seek nothing for ourselves; our only motto is:

*ādadānas tṛṇāṁ dantair idam yāce punah punah
śrīmad rūpa-padāmbhojadhūliḥ syāṁ janma-janmani*

“Taking grass between my teeth, I pray repeatedly that I may become a speck of dust at Sri Rupa Goswami’s lotus feet, birth after birth.” (Raghunath Das Goswami, *Muktā-carita*.)

“May the current of ideas propagated by Sri Rupa and his followers be distributed throughout the world. Remain exclusively faithful to the followers of Rupa Goswami and preach Rupa and Raghunath’s teachings fearlessly and enthusiastically. “All of you, remain united in submission to the Deity, seeking to satisfy the transcendental senses of the one, non-dual Supreme Consciousness. “Any arrangements we make in this world last for mere moments. Seeking the ultimate goal of life is an unavoidable necessity for us all. Work together toward a single purpose and win the eligibility to serve the original reservoir of devotion to Krishna. “Make your way through this impermanent, transitory life in whatever way you can, keeping the goal of worshiping the Lord foremost in your minds. Don’t abandon this goal, even in the face of hundreds of dangers, insults, or persecutions. Don’t lose your spirit if you see that the majority of people cannot accept the principle of selfless service to the Supreme Lord. Never abandon your bhajan, hearing and chanting Krishna-

kathā—the sum and substance of your devotional life. Please always chant the name of the Lord, being humbler than a blade of grass and more tolerant than a tree. “May we never under any circumstances become indifferent to the seven tongued sacrificial flame of the Holy Name. If our attraction to it remains ever increasing, we will achieve all perfection.^{2[4]} “We can only begin to comprehend the exquisite taste of service to Krishna’s lotus feet after transcending these worldly attractions and repulsions and being attracted by His divine name. Our only obligation is to go beyond duality and to enter that realm of eternal fulfillment.” Sri Purushottam is the site where Mahaprabhu relished the ecstasies of separation from Krishna. The mood of separation strengthens the experience of union. Overcome by the mood of Radharani in Her separation from Krishna after He had departed for Mathura, Mahaprabhu saw the blue water of the ocean as that of the Yamuna. When He saw the sand dunes on the beach (cāṭaka-parvata), He took them to be Giriraja Govardhana, while the gardens and orchards seemed to Him to be the forest of Vrindavan. In this mood of deep separation, the Lord cried out,

kāhānī mora prāṇa-nātha muralī-vadana kāhānī karoṇ kāhānī pāṇ vrajendra-nandana kāhāre kahiba kebā jāne mora duḥkha vrajendra-nandana binu phāṭe mora buka

“Where is the Lord of my life, Krishna, the flute player? What can I do to find him? Where is the son of Maharaja Nanda? To whom can I talk of my distress? Who will understand me? Without the son of Nanda Maharaja, my heart is splitting in two.” (CC 2.2.15-16)

As Mahaprabhu spoke these words, His breast became soaked with tears. For the twelve years that He lived in the Gambhira in Puri, the Lord continuously underwent ecstatic transformations due to the intensity of His emotion. He was constantly having visions of the Lord and sometimes would appear confused or speak as though delirious. Krishna Das Kaviraja Goswami records Mahaprabhu’s lamentation in the following words:

vamśī-gānāmrta-dhāma, lāvaṇyāmrta-janma-sthāna, je nā dekhe se cānda vadana se nayane kibā kāja, paruk tāra muṇḍe bāja, se nayana rahe ki kāraṇa

“Of what use are the eyes of one who never looks upon the moon-like face of Sri Krishna, the source of the nectarean flute song and the birthplace of all beauty? Let a lightning bolt fall on the head of such a person, for his eyes have no purpose whatsoever.”

Sakhī he śuna mora hata vidhi-bala mora vapu-citta-mana, sakala indriya-gana, krṣṇa binu sakala viphala

“O listen to Me, My sakhi! I have lost all good fortune. My body, heart and mind, as well as My senses, are all pointless without Krishna.”

kṛṣṇera madhura vāṇī, amṛterā taraṅgiṇī, tāra praveśa nāhi je śravaṇe kāñā-kāri-chidra sama, jāniha se śravaṇa, tāra janma haila akāraṇe

“The ears of one who has never heard Krishna’s sweet song, which is like a river of the nectar of immortality, are no better than the holes in a punctured cowry shell. Such an ear was brought into being without any reason.”

kṛṣṇera adharāmṛta, kṛṣṇa-guṇa-carita, sudhā-sāra-svāda-vinindana tāra svāda ye nā jāne, janmiyā nā maila kene, se rasanā bheka jihvā sama

“The flavor of the nectar from Krishna’s lips, His transcendental virtues and pastimes, surpasses that of the essence of ambrosia. Someone who has not tasted this nectar may as well have died, for his tongue is like that of a frog.”

mrga-mada nīlotpala, milane je parimala, jei hare tāra garva-māna hena kṛṣṇa-aṅga-gandha, jāra nāhi se sambandha, sei nāsā bhastrāra samāna

“The nose of one who has not smelled the fragrance of Krishna’s body, which mocks the aroma of musk combined with that of a bluish lotus flower, is no better than a blacksmith’s bellows.”

kṛṣṇa-kara-pada-tala, koṭi-candra-suśītala, tāra sparśa jena sparśa-maṇi tāra sparśa nāhi jāra, se jāuk chāra-khāra, sei vapu lauha-sama jāni

“The palms of Krishna’s hands and the soles of His feet are so cool and pleasant that they can be compared only to the light of millions of moons. They transform everything they touch. One who has never experienced that touch is ruined and his body is like a soulless lump of iron.” (CC 2.2.30-35)

Whenever our most worshipable Srila Prabhupada discussed these pastimes, he would be overcome with emotion and tears would flow from his eyes, and bathe his chest. It was precisely in order to relish these pastimes more deeply that Srila Prabhupada established the Purushottam Math at Chattak Parvat in Puri. Prior to this, of course, he regularly visited Puri, staying at Satasana Math, at Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur’s bhajan kutir, Nilakuthi, and other places. In all these places, he set an example of real bhajan. The secret truth of Mahaprabhu’s form and incarnation is found in the Divine Couple’s embrace in the early morning of the daily cycle of their eternal pastimes. Some advanced and knowledgeable rasika (aprākṛta rasajña) devotees explain the meaning of Srila Prabhupada’s entrance into the eternal pastime in the early morning as his rejoining the Divine

Couple to serve Them while They are locked in such an embrace. We are also aware that Srila Prabhupada identified himself as Sri Varshabhanavi-dayita Das, which means the “servant of Radharani’s beloved.” One of Srila Prabhupada’s favorite books was Raghunath Das Goswami’s *Vilāpa-kusumāñjalī*, all 104 verses of which he cherished and learned by heart. He considered any blessing given by Krishna without the mercy of Radharani to be Krishna’s deception. He never considered Krishna alone and unaccompanied by Radha to be of great significance. He would quote one of the last verses of *Vilāpa-kusumāñjalī* to illustrate this point:

*āśā-bharair amṛta-sindhu-mayaiḥ kathañcit kālo mayātigamitaḥ kila sāmprataṁ
hi tvāṁ cet kṛpāṁ mayi vidhāsyasi naiva kiṁ me prāṇair vrajena ca varoru
bakāriṇāpi*

“O Radha of beautiful thighs! In reciting this poem I have passed a little time revealing my ambrosia-filled hopes. If you are not merciful to me now, then of what use to me is my life, my residence in Vraja, or even the company of Krishna, the enemy of Baka, himself?” (VK 104)

Srila Prabhupada experienced the separation felt by Radharani from Sri Krishna’s departure in the identity of Nayanamani Manjari, the dearest companion of Rupa Manjari herself. Whenever he described the last twelve years of Mahaprabhu’s pastimes at the Gambhira, during which He experienced ecstatic feelings (mahabhava) of separation in the mood of Radharani, Prabhupada would completely lose himself in ecstasy and forget the external world. When his trance broke, he would repeat Krishna Das Kaviraja Goswami’s words from the Chaitanya Charitamrita, his voice fluttering with tears:

*hā hā kṛṣṇa prāṇa-dhana, hā hā padma-locana, hā hā divya sad-guṇa-sāgara!
hā hā śyāma-sundara, hā hā pītāmbara-dhara, hā hā rāsa-vilāsa nāgara kāhān
gele tomā pāi, tumi kaha tāhān jāi*

“Alas! Where is Krishna, the treasure of my life? Where is the lotus-eyed one? Alas! Where is the divine ocean of all transcendental qualities? Alas! Where is the beautiful, blackish youth dressed in yellow garments? Alas! Where is the hero of the Rasa dance? Where can I go to find Him? Tell me and I will go there.” (CC 3.17.60-61)

One day in the Gambhira, Mahaprabhu put His arms around Ramananda Raya and Svarupa Damodar’s shoulders and explained that the only way to attain the mood of love found in Vraja was through the chanting of the Holy Name. In the

Age of Kali, the person who chants the Holy Name shows himself to be the most intelligent and capable of attaining Krishna's lotus feet. Offense less chanting of the mere reflection of the Holy Name results in the destruction of all one's anarthas, while chanting of the pure Name results in the attainment of love for Krishna and His lotus feet. Of all these Names, the most potent are those that the Divine Couple Radha and Krishna Themselves chant when separated from each other. Srila Prabhupada told his disciples that chanting these Names in the mood of separation was the topmost form of worship.

Srila Sanatan Goswami also taught that chanting the Holy Name is the devotional practice with the greatest capacity to produce ecstatic love for Krishna, having the power to enchant Krishna like a magic spell. Srila Prabhupada set the standard of unrelenting enthusiasm for chanting these Holy Names and taught his disciples the importance of following his example. When Srila Prabhupada was relishing the mood of separation from the Lord, his natural feelings of ecstatic love would be observable to everyone. He particularly relished the internal significance of Lord Gaurasundara's Rathayatra pastime, wherein Mahaprabhu, in the mood of Radharani, took Puri to be Kurukshetra and wished to carry Lord Jagannath off to Sundaracala, which He saw as Vraja. The strong feelings and deep connection that Srila Prabhupada had for this lila were particularly evident when he established an annual Rathayatra festival at the Kurukshetra Math so that he could relish the same mood there. Our most worshipable Srila Prabhupada was unwaveringly devoted to the chanting of the Holy Name from his childhood.

While Bhaktivinoda Thakur was a deputy magistrate in Serampore, Srila Prabhupada was only a seventh grade student. When he recognized Prabhupada's enthusiasm for the worship of the Holy Name, the Thakur gave him a gift of a japa mala made of tulasi beads which he had brought back from a trip to Jagannath Puri. Along with the japa beads, the Thakur also initiated him in the chanting of Harinam and the Nrisimha mantra. In 1881, when Bhaktivinoda Thakur started construction on Bhakti Bhavan, his Calcutta home in the Ram Bagan neighborhood, a small deity of Kurma was found during the digging of its foundations. Though Srila Prabhupada was only eight or nine years old at the time, when his father saw his eagerness to worship the deity, he gave him the Kurma mantra and taught him the related procedures. From that time on, Prabhupada regularly engaged in the service of the deity and also began wearing tilak and following other aspects of Vaishnava behavior.

I myself have had the good fortune of seeing this Kurma Salagram, which is still present at the Bhakti Bhavan building in Calcutta. Srila Prabhupada began to preach Mahaprabhu's message in 1905 when he came to live in Sri Mayapur. During this time, he followed in the footsteps of the Namacharya, Srila Hari Das

Thakur, and began chanting three lakhs of Holy Names every day, taking up a vow to chant a billion (śata-koti) in all. At the same time, he took up severe ascetic practices. In 1909, he had a cottage built on the site of Chandrasekhara's house where he continued his intense bhajan. By its side, he also had a tank excavated. He saw this pond to be a direct manifestation of Radha Kund and so gave it that name.

On March 7, 1918, on the occasion of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's appearance day, Srila Prabhupada took tridaṇḍi-sannyāsa in Sri Mayapur. On that same day, he consecrated the deities of Guru-Gauranga and Radha-Govinda at the house of Chandrasekhara Acharya and established the Sri Chaitanya Math. On March 2, 1923, work began on the construction of the temple there. In the main temple room, deities of Guru-Gauranga and Gandharvika-Giridhari were installed, while in the four corners the worship of the founders of the four Vaishnava schools or sampradāyas (coming down from Lakshmi, Brahma, Rudra, and the four Kumaras) and their acharyas (Ramanuja, Madhva, Vishnuswami, and Nimbarka) was established. On March 18, the cornerstone for the proposed temple at the birthplace of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was laid, and another for a smaller temple at Murari Gupta's house. Three months later, at 10 A.M. on June 13, the four-armed form of Vishnu known as Adhokshaja, formerly worshiped by Jagannath Misra, was found in the ground while digging the foundations for the new Yoga Pith temple. This mūrti is still worshiped there.

On Dol Purnima, March 20, 1935, the Maharaja of the independent state of Tripura, Sir Bir Vikram Kishor Devavarma Manikya Bahadur, came to Mayapur on Srila Prabhupada's invitation to officially open the temple doors. Chaitanya Math's first branch opened in Calcutta in 1920 in a rented house at 1 Ultadingi Junction Road. The center was transferred to a newly built temple in Bagh Bazaar in October of 1930. Gradually Srila Prabhupada and his disciples spread Mahaprabhu's gospel of pure devotional service to many places throughout India and abroad. This preaching work is still going on today.

Sometimes Prabhupada went himself; other times he sent his qualified disciples on preaching missions to distribute this message of Mahaprabhu to all and sundry. He also published daily, weekly, and monthly magazines and journals in various languages, as well as many of the books written by Mahaprabhu's dear associates, the Six Goswamis. Through the use of such means, which were revolutionary for the time, the movement expanded rapidly and widely. Srila Prabhupada told his disciples, "May Bhaktivinoda Thakur's songs and transcendental literature, which contain the same deep purport as those of Narottama Das Thakur, be distributed in abundance throughout Bengal, Orissa and Assam. May intelligent people all over the world recognize the glories of Jaiva-dharma and Chaitanya-śikṣāmṛta. May they carry aloft the victory flag of

non-sectarian religion and recognize that Sri Krishna Chaitanya, the Holy Name and the Srimad-Bhagavatam are one and the same. May this transcendental institution of the followers of Rupa Goswami be forever engaged in Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's service. The Gaudiya Math's supreme motto is found in Mahaprabhu's Śikṣāṣṭakam:

param vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam.

The only thing we desire in our lives is the dust of the lotus feet of Rupa Goswami, who made the desires of Lord Chaitanya a reality on this earth.” The unique characteristic of Srila Prabhupada’s preaching was that even though he often spoke about the highest realms of devotional perfection, he always took care that none of his disciples got ahead of themselves and skipped necessary intermediate steps in the stage of practice to engage in anadhikāracarcā (“discussion of matters for which one is not qualified”). Sādhana bhakti, the practice of devotional service, is divided into two streams: vaidhī bhakti and rāgānugā bhakti. The word rāga means a spontaneous attachment to the object of love. Those for whom such a natural and spontaneous affection has not yet become a reality, but who worship the Lord according to the scriptural injunctions, are engaged in vaidhī bhakti. Rāgātmikā bhakti is the kind of devotion experienced exclusively by the residents of Vrindavan: it is characterized by spontaneous and powerful passion. The devotional service that emulates this passionate devotion of Vraja is called rāgānugā bhakti.

vidhi-mārga-rata jane svādhīnatā ratna dāne rāga-mārge karān praveśa rāga-vaśavartī haiyā pārakīya bhāvāśraye labhe jīva kṛṣṇa-premāvēśa

“The Holy Name gives the jewel of independence to the person fixed in the regulative principles, placing him on the path of spontaneous devotion. That person, overcome by spontaneous attachment to the Lord, takes shelter of the parakīyā mood and goes on to become absorbed in love for Krishna.” (Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur)

If one attempts the cultivation of *rāga marga* (the path of spontaneous devotion) prior to gaining the proper qualifications for such practice and at the same time pays less attention to the chanting of the Holy Names, he is like the person who tries to pick a fruit without climbing the tree. He will only get the damaged fruit that has fallen to the ground. Prabhupada characterized those who engaged in such anadhikāra-carcā as Prakrita Sahajiya and rebuked them for their entering into realms for which they were not qualified. Prabhupada wrote in his commentary on the Chaitanya Charitamrita: “Prakrita Sahajiyas and other followers of corrupt paths have not in fact acquired a genuine taste for

devotional service: they are called ajāta-ruci. Even so, they falsely think themselves qualified for rāgānugā bhakti and thus give up studying the theological literature and learning the genuine path set out by Rupa Goswami.

Instead they give proof of their foolishness by engaging in illicit sexual activities and culturing a taste for mundane pleasures. Such people are most unfortunate and deprived for, by doing so, they assure their spiritual destruction.”
(Anubhāṣya, Madhya 22.) In Bhakti-sandarbha, Sri Jiva Goswami outlines the process to spiritual realization:

prathamam nāmnāḥ śravaṇam antahkaraṇa-śuddhy-ar�am apekṣyam. śuddhe cāntah-karaṇe rūpa-śravaṇena tad-udaya-yogyatā bhavati. samyag-udite ca rūpe guṇānāṁ sphurāṇāṁ sampadyate. sampanne ca guṇānāṁ sphurāṇe parikaravaiśiṣṭyena tad-vaiśiṣṭyāṁ sampadyate. tatas teṣu nāma-rūpa-guṇa-parikareṣu samyak sphuriteṣu līlānāṁ sphurāṇāṁ suṣṭhu bhavati.

“First it is expected that one should hear the Lord’s names in order to purify the heart. Once the mind and intelligence have been purified in this way, one can hear about Krishna’s form, through which one’s qualification to visualize it is obtained. When the form of the Lord has been clearly visualized, one can experience His qualities. Once these have been clearly understood, one develops one’s own individual spiritual characteristics through the particular characteristics of the Lord’s associates. Thus, once the name, form, qualities and associates of the Lord have been clearly realized, a clear realization of Krishna’s activities will follow.” (Krama-sandarbha commentary to SB 7.5.18)

Krishna Das Kaviraja Goswami translates the last verse of the Rasa-lila (vikrīḍitāṁ vraja-vadhūbhīr idam ca viṣṇoh, SB 10.33.32) as follows:

*vraja-vadhū-saṅge kṛṣṇera rāsādi-vilāsa jei jana kahe śune kariyā viśvāsa
hṛd-roga-kāma tāñra tat-kāle haya kṣaya tina-guṇa-kṣobha nahe mahā-dhīra
haya*

“Anyone who listens to or describes the rāsa-līlā and other pastimes between the gopis and Krishna with faith is immediately freed from the disease of the heart—lust. Such a devotee is no longer influenced by the three qualities of material nature and so becomes wise.” (Chaitanya Charitamrita 3.5.45-6)

Some unscrupulous characters take this verse and others like it to mean that they can give up the chanting of the Holy Names and spend their time in hearing and discussing the erotic pastimes of the Lord such as His Rasa-lila, which is the most glorious of all the Lord’s activities. They think that by hearing about Krishna’s Rasa-lila, in a state of material contamination, they can become purified and thus qualified for rāgānugā practice. Srila Prabhupada had the

following to say about this in his commentary to the above verses: “A person who hears or describes the Rasa-lila and other such pastimes as found in the Bhagavatam, living them in his transcendental heart, then the material desires for sensual pleasure wane to nothingness. Because Krishna’s pastimes are transcendental, one who hears or speaks about them enters into that transcendental domain where the material qualities can no longer influence him. Even while in contact with matter, he is unaffected; his mind remains calm and steady. He is able to understand his own qualification to serve Krishna. No one should think, as do the Prakrita Sahajiyas, that an ordinary living entity will overcome lust by hearing and chanting these pastimes if he is filled with contaminations like lust and greed, if he avoids accumulating the appropriate knowledge of the relationships between matter, the individual soul and the Supreme Lord, if he remains fixed in a subjective world centered on his own sensual pleasures, if his intelligence continues to be permeated with material conceptions, if he neglects all the purifying activities of devotional service in practice, and especially if he takes the spiritual love affairs of the Supreme Lord to have the same kinds of sensual motivations that he himself experiences. For this reason, Mahaprabhu emphasized the word ‘faith’ (viśvāsa) in order to forestall such sahajiya arguments. Thus Sukadeva has warned us in the Bhagavatam:

*naitat samācarej jātu manasāpi hy anīśvaraḥ
vinaśyat acirān maudhyād yathā'rudrābdhijam viṣam*

“ ‘One who is not as powerful as the Supreme Controller should certainly never imitate the activities of the transcendental Rasa-lila of Krishna, not even within his mind. If out of ignorance one does so, he will be destroyed, just as if he were to imitate Lord Shiva, who drank poison produced from the ocean.’ ” (SB 10.33.30)

Srila Jiva Goswami also wrote the following significant commentary in Bhaktisandarbha (338): “Thus it is self-evident that the Lord’s pastimes in association with Radha are supreme and, similarly, that worship of this form of the Lord is foremost. However, Krishna’s intimate pastimes with Radha should not be studied by those whose male organ undergoes transformation while doing so, nor by those who are in the moods of parenthood, friendship or servitude, for it goes against their spiritual disposition.”^{3[5]}

*anugrahāya bhaktānām mānuṣam deham āśritah
bhajate tādrśīḥ krīḍā yāḥ śrutvā tat-paro bhavet*

“Krishna appears in His human form and performs pastimes such as the rāsalīlā

in order to show mercy to the devotees. Those qualified devotees who hear such pastimes become devoted to His service.” (10.33.36)

In the above verse, the word bhajate means “performs” and tat-paro means “devoted to His service.” But many are those who get the contrary result because they engage in practices for which they have no qualification. For this reason Srila Prabhupada sought to protect the fallen conditioned souls by instructing them to chant the Holy Names in the mood of separation. Krishna has placed all His potencies in His own names and therefore it is said that all perfections come from chanting them (ihā haite sarva-siddhi haibe sabāra). There are sixty-four practices included in the process of sādhanā bhakti, of which nine are considered to be the most effective in awakening love for Krishna and therefore attaining Him. Of these, the chanting of the Holy Names is supreme:

*bhajanera madhye śreṣṭha nava-vidhā bhakti kṛṣṇa-prema kṛṣṇa dite dhare
mahā-śakti tāra madhye sarva-śreṣṭha nāma-saṅkīrtana niraparādhe laile nāma
pāya prema-dhana*

“Of the many ways of executing devotional service, there are nine that are considered to be foremost, for they possess a great capacity to deliver love for Krishna and thus Krishna himself. Of these nine processes of devotional service, the most important is the chanting of the Lord’s holy name, for if one chants without committing offenses he will obtain the treasure of love for the Lord.”
(CC 3.4.70-1)

A devotee who reverently follows the practices and regulative principles of the vidhi-bhakti path, and particularly takes to regular chanting of the Holy Names, receives the mercy of the Name that gradually bestows upon him the qualifications to engage in rāgānugā bhakti. If one does not seek the mercy of the Holy Name first, but artificially tries to appropriate the right to engage in such practices, he is like a pumpkin that ripens too quickly and bursts—he inevitably falls down. For this reason, Srila Prabhupada did not artificially give siddha-praṇālī and instructions to remember the aṣṭa-kālīya-līlā to people who were not ready for it. As a result, some people call the devotees of the Gaudiya Math jñānī-bhaktas, but this is offensive to the lotus feet of Srila Prabhupada and will cause insurmountable obstacles to their spiritual advancement. Srila Prabhupada acted only out of compassion and for the benefit of the fallen souls. Because they do not realize the truth of Mahaprabhu’s statement that all perfections come from the Holy Name, the Prakrita Sahajiyas make ignorant and offensive comments and this is ultimately why they are repeatedly seen engaging in various kinds of illicit sexual activity. In conclusion, we offer our heartfelt prayers to the lotus feet of our most worshipable Srila Prabhupada: “O master!

Please be merciful to us and gradually lead us from the vidhi-mārga to the rāgānugā path by giving us ever increasing enthusiasm for the worship of the Holy Names, in the way that you have instructed us. Then we will be able to very quickly win the right to enter into the most secret realms of the mystic service of the Lord. We are the least of the servants of your servants; knowing this, Radha-Madanamohana, Govinda and Gopinath will be merciful to us and enrich our understanding of the sambandha, abhidheya and pra-yojana-tattvas. Then they will give us entry into their loving service and make our lives completely perfect. We will never make a pretense of being advanced rasika devotees in order to win profit, adoration and prestige because we know that such falsehood will only lead us inevitably down to hell. Therefore, the most intelligent thing to do is to follow the example of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and worship Krishna's holy name in the spirit of separation. Through the mercy of the Holy Name we will have the good fortune of attaining all perfection in spiritual life." [This article first appeared in Chaitanya Vāṇī, 18.11 (Feb. 1978), pp. 204-210]

A Few Glimpses of the Lotus Feet of Srila Prabhupada

Once, Srila Prabhupada was standing on the front porch of the Sri Chaitanya Math temple taking darshan of the deities of Sri Sri Guru-GaurangaGandharvika-Girid-hari. The door to the altar is not very wide and Srila Prabhupada did not have his glasses on. Standing next to him was one of his dear disciples. The disciple thought perhaps Prabhupada could not view the deities very well through the narrow doorway. He said, "Prabhupada, this doorway is not very wide. It will be difficult for you to see the deities from here." When he heard this, Prabhupada smiled and gave the following teaching for the benefit of us all: "We should not think of the Supreme Lord as an object of our mundane vision. We should rather consider how we might become worthy objects of His vision. Then He will both want to see us and reveal Himself to us."

ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ

"The holy name, form, qualities and pastimes of Sri Krishna are divine and transcendental. They cannot be experienced by material senses. The Lord manifests Himself spontaneously on the tongue of a devotee who is eager to serve Him." (BRS 1.2.109) Just as a devotee waits to see the Lord with great

patience and eagerness, sometimes the Lord also waits with great patience and eagerness to see His devotee. It is described in the Chaitanya Charitamrita how the deity of Gopal in Vrindavan was hidden as He waited for Sri Madhavendra Puri, His beloved devotee.

bahu-dina tomāra patha kari nirīkṣaṇa kabe āsi mādhava āmā karibe sevana

“I have been watching the road for many days, waiting for you. I have been wondering, ‘When will Madhavendra Puri come here to serve Me?’ ” (CC 2.4.39) The Supreme Lord, Who succumbs to His devotee’s love, eagerly waits to see him in this way.

bhaktera dravya prabhu kāri kāri khāya abhaktera dravya prabhu ulati nā cāya

“The Lord will grab food from His devotee, but will not even glance at anything offered Him by a non-devotee.” That is why eagerness to serve the Lord in loving devotion must be present.

bhaktir evainam nayati bhaktir evainam darśayati bhakti-vaśah puruṣah bhaktir eva bhūyasi

“Devotion attracts the Lord, devotion reveals Him; He is influenced by devotion. Nothing is more powerful than bhakti.” (Māṭhara-śruti) When our devotion has become filled with intense desire or anurāga, then we will have become worthy of being seen by Krishna. The following verse is found in the Brahma-samhitā (5.38):

*premāñjana-cchurita-bhakti-vilocanena santah sadaiva hrdayeṣu vilokayanti
yam śyāmasundaram acintya-guṇa-svarūpam govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham
bhajāmi*

“I worship the primeval Lord Govinda, the beautiful black boy with innumerable inconceivable attributes. The pure devotees see Him in their heart of hearts with the eye of devotion tinged with the salve of love.”

On another day, a few disciples were accompanying Srila Prabhupada as he walked from the Chaitanya Math to the Yoga Pith. Unfortunately, people from Mayapur village were in the habit of using the sides of the road to go to the toilet. One of Prabhupada’s dear disciples covered his nose with his cloth and showed signs of discomfort at the odor. Prabhupada laughed and said, “It seems that you cannot smell the sweet fragrance of the Holy Dham; only the mundane stink of this material world is entering your nose. You should not think of the Dham as a mundane place; it is an extension of the Lord’s own person.” He then quoted from Jiva Goswami’s Sandarbhas:

ekam eva tat parama-tattvam svābhāvikācintya-śaktyā sarvadaiva svarūpa-tadrūpa-vaib-hava-jīva-prad-hāna-rūpeṇa caturdhāvatiṣṭhate

“The one Supreme Truth is always manifested in four different ways by His inseparable inconceivable potency: as svarūpa, His original form; as tad-rūpa-vaibhava, His expansions or spiritual energy; the jīva souls; and the pradhāna or material energy.”

From February 3 to March 17, 1930, Srila Prabhupada put on an unprecedented Vaishnava exposition, the *Śrī-Dhāma-Māyāpura-Navadvīpa-pradarśinī*. Many dignitaries were invited for the occasion and the famous Bengali chemist, Sir Prafulla Chandra Raya, came to Mayapur expressly to open the pradarśinī. In order to house the exhibits, a large number of temporary structures were built of bamboo and corrugated tin. By the grace of Sri Gurudeva and Lord Gauranga, the skies remained clear throughout the festival period. On the last day, however, a violent storm tore off the tin roofs and sent them flying into the air. One sheet of tin flew against the tower of the main temple building, chipping off the concrete plaster and the large metal rod from the spire over the shrine of Ramanujacharya. It then continued on its way, finally landing next to the tube well by the kirtan hall.^{1[6]}

After the tempest had died down, Prabhupada and his disciples went to inspect the damage and saw that the spire had been broken. Srila Prabhupada said, “Ramanuja is the acharya of deity worship because of his dedication to that devotional practice. If his dome has been damaged, it is surely because there has been some defect in the service to the deities in the temple.” It turned out that the pujari had indeed made some grave error in his service. He was removed from his position and the damage to the dome was repaired. If anything was ever stolen from the temple or if Srila Prabhupada or one of the other residents of the ashram fell seriously ill, Prabhupada would warn everyone about offenses in worshiping the deities. He repeatedly put his disciples on guard against offenses to the Holy Name, to the Deity, and to the Holy Dham. Srila Prabhupada gave Aprakrita Bhakti Saranga Prabhu the responsibility to preach the message of Lord Chaitanya in Europe and America. Prior to sending him off to London on October 23, 1936, he gave him instructions in the worship of the Gomati, Gandaki and Govardhana śilās. To bid him a glorious passage, a large public meeting was held in the Bagh Bazaar Gaudiya Math’s kirtan hall (Sārasvata-śravaṇa-sadana). In his speech, Srila Prabhupada encouraged Bhakti Saranga Prabhu in his London preaching mission and gave him profuse blessings. As Mahaprabhu’s eternal associate, he naturally looked for ways to benefit all of humanity by preaching Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu’s teachings around the world. Out of his firm faith in this principle, he demonstrated an indomitable enthusiasm for practicing and preaching Mahaprabhu’s message wherever he

went. Srila Prabhupada had previously (from March 1933 to 1936) sent his disciples Tridandi Swami Bhakti Pradip Tirtha and Bhakti Hridoy Bon Maharaj to London and Germany with the goal of holding public meetings to preach Mahaprabhu's message. He kept in touch with them by airmail, regularly sending them articles and preaching advice. Through this effort, many highly educated and respectable people had the opportunity to hear about Mahaprabhu. With Prabhupada's approval, these two preachers established the London Gaudiya Mission Society and the London Gaudiya Math. Lord Zetland was made chairman of the Mission Society and he led weekly discussions of Srila Prabhupada's epistles on the special characteristics of Lord Chaitanya's message. Prabhupada also sent missionaries to Rangoon in Burma (now Myanmar).

In 1936, the Rangoon preaching center was opened and deities were installed there. Unfortunately, the political climate in Burma² then was such that people were unable to appreciate Mahaprabhu's religion of love and the center was closed not long afterward. Srila Prabhupada either went himself with his entourage or sent his disciples to most of the pilgrimage sites and major cities throughout both northern and southern India establishing preaching centers, Deity worship, and spreading Lord Chaitanya's religion of love in all these places. During the time Prabhupada was present in this world, sixty-four mathas were established, a list of which was printed in the weekly *Gauḍīya* magazine. Today, we see that his disciples have greatly expanded the number of temples and mathas throughout India and the rest of the world. Srila Prabhupada also had the goal of establishing 108 or more shrines to Mahaprabhu's lotus feet in all the places that He had visited in the course of His travels throughout India. During Prabhupada's lifetime, eight such shrines were established at Mandara, Kanai Natasha, Jajpur, Kurmakshetra, Simhachala, Kavoor, Mangalagiri, and Chatrabhoga. Since then, other such shrines have been placed in Maldah, Puri (Atharonala), and other places. Srila Prabhupada used to participate personally in the circumambulation or parikrama of Vrindavan and Gaura Mandala. He also often visited the main holy places in Puri. He made the annual parikrama of Nabadwip Dham an institution, which his disciples have maintained out of faithfulness to his instruction. Srila Prabhupada used to say that the *Śrī-Dhām-parikrama* gave everyone the opportunity to simultaneously engage in all five principal devotional acts (associating with devotees, chanting the Holy Name, hearing the Bhagavatam, living in the Holy Dham, and worshiping the Deity). For this reason, we continue to perform this service annually and with great care on the days preceding Mahaprabhu's appearance day on Dol Purnima. To make an impression on the minds of the conditioned souls, Srila Prabhupada established a program of transcendental diorama exhibitions illustrating the main points of Lord Chaitanya's philosophy.

The Kurukshetra Gaudiya Exhibition (pradarśanī) was opened on November 4, 1928, August 21, 1933, and June 19, 1936; the Sri Dham Mayapur-Nabadwip Exhibition on February 9, 1930; the Calcutta Gaudiya Math Spiritual Exhibition (Pāramārthika Pradarśanī) on November 5, 1930; the Calcutta Gaudiya Math Saintly Teachings Exhibition (Sat-śikṣā Pradarśanī) on September 6, 1931; and the Dhaka Saintly Teachings Exhibition on January 6, 1933; the Patna Spiritual Exhibition on November 14, 1933, the Kashi Spiritual Exhibition on December 24, 1933 and the Prayag Saintly Teachings Exhibition on January 7, 1936.

In the 82nd chapter of the Tenth Canto and in the Chaitanya Charitamrita, the gopis' visit to the *Sāmantapañcaka* lake in Kurukshetra is described. This took place after they had been suffering from Krishna's separation for many years and went there to meet Him when the occasion of a solar eclipse presented itself. Mahaprabhu relived the mood of the gopis on the occasion of this meeting whenever He saw Lord Jagannath in Puri. Overwhelmed by Srimati Radharani's mood of separation, Mahaprabhu would express the desire to take the Lord back to Vraja with Him. As He pulled Lord Jagannath on the chariot from the Kurukshetra of Puri to the Vraja of Sundarachala He would sing,

sei to parāṇa-nātha pāinu jāhā lāgi madana-dahane jhuri mainu

"I have finally found the Lord of my life for whom I have spent so long burning in the fires of love." (CC 2.1.55)

This is the lila of Mahaprabhu at the Rathayatra. Srimati Radharani could not bear to see Krishna in the dress of a king, surrounded by the royal horses, elephants and courtiers. So She said,

anyera hṛdaya man, mora mana vṛndāvan, mane vane eka kari jāni

tāhān tomār pada-dvaya, karāha yadi udaya, tabe tomār pūrṇa kṛpā māni

"For others, the mind is at the heart of their being, but My mind is Vrindavan; I consider both My mind and Vrindavan to be one. Were you to place Your lotus feet there in My Vrindavan-mind, I would deem it the fullest expression of Your mercy." (CC 2.13.137)

*jagannātha dekhi prabhura se bhāva uthila sei bhāvāviṣṭa hañā dhuwā gāoāila
avašeše rādhā kṛṣṇe kare nivedana sei tumi sei āmi sei nava saṅgama tathāpi
āmāra mana hare vṛndāvana vṛndāvane udaya karāo āpana-caraṇa ihān
lokāraṇya hātī ghorā ratha dhvani tāhān puṣpāraṇya bhringa-pika-nāda śuni
ihān rāja-veśa saṅge saba kṣatriya-gaṇa tāhān gopa-veśa saṅge muralī-vādana
vraje tomāra saṅge yei sukha-āsvādana sei sukha-samudrera ihān nāhi eka kaṇa*

*āmā lañā punah līlā karaha vṛndāvane tabe āmāra mano-vāñchā haya ta
pūrane*

When He saw Lord Jagannath, Mahaprabhu became absorbed in the mood of Radharani and had the devotees sing these couplets. He spoke the following words: “You are the same Krishna, and I am the same Radharani. We are meeting again in the same way that We did when Our love was first beginning. Even so, My mind still yearns for Vrindavan. So please bring Your lotus feet back to Vrindavan once again. Here there is a great forest of people making a horrendous din with their elephants, horses, and chariots. In Vrindavan, however, there are forests of flowers, the sounds of humming bees and the cuckoos’ song. Here at Kurukshetra You are dressed like a king and accompanied by great warriors, but in Vrindavan You dressed like an ordinary cowherd boy, accompanied only by Your beautiful flute. Here there is not even a drop of the ocean of transcendental happiness that I enjoyed with You in Vrindavan. I therefore request You to come to Vrindavan and once again enjoy pastimes with Me. If You do so, My heart’s desire will be fulfilled.” (CC 2.13.125-131)

When Gaudiya Vaishnavas see the Rathayatra in Puri they think just like Mahaprabhu: “I will take Krishna home with me to Vraja.” (krṣṇa lañā vraje jāi ebhāva antare, CC 2.1.156) Overcome by Mahaprabhu’s mood of love in separation, Srila Prabhupada established a matha in Kurukshetra called the Sri Vyasa Gaudiya Math where he instituted an annual Rathayatra festival and spiritual exhibition. Madhavendra Puri called Krishna Mathurānātha or “Lord of Mathura.” This name revealed how his heart was being torn apart by the mood of separation. In the same way, Srila Prabhupada, who considered himself to be the humble servant of the lover of Vrishabhanu’s daughter, and would be overcome by feelings of separation whenever the subject matter of Radha and Krishna’s meeting in Kurukshetra came up. In particular, when opening the Bhagavata exhibition in Kurukshetra, as he spoke about this lila, tears flowed from his eyes, and wet his breast and his voice choked with ecstasy. Whenever he took darshan of Lord Jagannath in Puri, he would relish the verse written by Rupa Goswami and quoted in Chaitanya Charitamrita:

*priyah so’yam krṣṇah sahacari kurukṣetra-militas tathāham sā rādhā tad idam
ubhayoh saṅgama-sukham tathāpy antah-khelan-madhura-muralī-pañcama-juṣe
mano me kālindī-pulina-vipināya spr̥hayati*

“O companion! This is the same beloved Krishna meeting Me here in Kurukshetra; and I am the same Radha, and both of Us are feeling the joy of union. Even so, My mind wishes for the forest by the banks of the Yamuna where the fifth note of His flute reverberated sweetly within My heart.”

(Padyāvalī, 383)

When rejecting those things that oppose pure devotion, Prabhupada could be more uncompromising than a bolt of lightning. On the other hand, when accepting those things that are favorable to pure devotional service, his heart was softer than a rose. Tears would pour from his eyes whenever he spoke on Radharani's distress at Krishna's leaving for Mathura. Srila Prabhupada had an incomparable attachment to Hari-kathā, ambrosial discussions about the Lord. Hours would go by, even so, he would become irritated when his disciples indicated that prasad had been served. He would say, "There is really a famine of Hari-kathā in the world!" Sometimes he was advised by doctors not to speak for the sake of his health. If someone asked him how he was, he would answer, "I am well, but they won't let me speak about Krishna. That is what is making me sick." Prabhu also loved kirtan, but he hated hearing kirtan that was sung by unqualified people, contained elements that went against the pure dogmas of Gaudiya Vaishnavism, or in which there was a corrupt understanding of the divine rasas (rasābhāsa). He wrote the following verse making it clear who was actually qualified to chant the Holy Names:

prāṇa āche jāra, sei hetu pracāra pratiṣṭhāśā hīna krṣṇa-gāthā saba śrī-dayita-dāsa kīrtanete āśa kara uccaiḥsvare harināma raba

"O mind! This humble servant of Radha and Krishna places his hopes in kirtan and loudly sings the names of Lord Hari! Those who have spiritual life in abundance preach the Lord's message. Every word they speak is free from the taint of desire for personal prestige." (Vaiṣṇava ke?)

Taking shelter of the Lord without any desire for personal aggrandizement is what gives the devotee life. A non-devotee who has not taken shelter of the Lord may speak about Krishna, but such topics are lifeless, as devoid of spirit as a cadaver, and are not worthy of being heard. Prabhupada could not tolerate discussion of topics that were outside of one's range of qualification (anadhikāra-carcā). Constant remembrance of Lord Krishna's lotus feet is the purifier of existence and results in devotion to the Lord. "One who chants without offenses attains love for Krishna" (niraparādhe laile nāma upajaya prema-dhana). Prabhupada was unable to tolerate those who made no effort to chant the Holy Name without offenses but made an external show of practicing devotional service while seeking profit, adoration and prestige.

mādhavendra purī bhāva-ghare curi nā karila kabhu sadāi jānaba

“Always remember that Madhavendra Puri never stole from the treasure house of divine emotion.” (Vaiṣṇava ke?)

And Jagadananda Pandit says in Prema-vivarta:

jadi bhajibe gorā sarala kara mana kuṭi-nāṭi chāṛi bhaja gorāra caraṇa gorāra āmi gorāra āmi balile nāhi cale gorāra ācāra gorāra vicāra laile phala phale

“If you wish to worship Gaura, then take on an honest attitude. Stop all nitpicking and simply worship His lotus feet. It is not enough to repeat over and over, ‘I belong to Gaura.’ You will get the results of your worship if you act according to His standards and accept His doctrines.”

In the words of the great souls, *vidhi-mārge vraja-bhāva pāite nāhi śakti*:

“One cannot attain the mood of Vraja by mere practice of the external principles of devotion.”

The actual gift of spontaneous devotion is awarded only by the intense greed to receive it, coupled with the blessings of proximity to a rāgatmika sad-guru (a genuine preceptor whose divine loving relationship is established with the Lord) who is a resident of Vraja Dham. Pretentiously imitating the activities of realized souls is a disturbance to society, resulting in anadhikāra-carcā, “unqualified discussions.” Premature attempts at spontaneous devotion are of no avail. In the context of the verse quoted above, one may well ask what is the real method of attaining service of the mood of Vraja residents, or rāgānugā bhakti? Sriman Mahaprabhu revealed the answer to this question when He informed His confidential associates Svarupa Damodar and Ramananda Raya to deeply imbibe the following verses:

nāma-saṅkīrtana kalau parama upāya ihā haite sarva-siddhi haibe sabāra

“The supreme process of spiritual realization in the age of Kali is the chanting of the Holy Name. Through it you will attain all perfections.”

The Holy Name is to be taken shelter of in complete faith and this will ensure all perfection to the chanter.

īśat vikaśi punah dekhāya nija-rūpa-guṇa citta hari laya kṛṣṇa pāśa pūrṇa vikaśita hañā vraje more jāya lañā dekhāya nija svarūpa vilāsa

“When the Name is even slightly revealed, it shows me my own spiritual form and characteristics. It steals my mind and takes it to Krishna’s side. When the Name is fully revealed, it takes me directly to Vraja, where it shows me my personal role in the eternal pastimes.” (Krishna-nāma dhare kata bala?

Śaraṇāgati)

The Lord has two forms: the vācya, the Lord who is signified by His name, and the vācaka, the Lord's name. But of the two, the Lord's name, the vācaka, is more compassionate than the Lord Himself. The signifier bestows more blessings than the signified. In view of this, it is good advice to avoid inventing other means of spiritual advancement, which ultimately lead to deviation from the path. Of course, some fortunate devotional practitioners encounter a sadguru who is qualified to show them how to progress on the rāgānugā bhakti path. For them, such restrictions do not apply.

*vikrīditam vraja-vadhūbhir idam ca viṣṇoh śraddhānvito 'nuśrṇuyād atha
varṇayed yaḥ bhaktim parām bhagavati pratilabhyā kāmam hṛd-rogam āśv
apahinoty acireṇa dhīraḥ*

“The self-controlled and faithful person who hears or describes these pastimes of the Lord Vishnu with the wives of Vraja will attain the highest stage of devotion to the Lord and will very quickly be freed from the disease of the heart known as lust.” (SB 10.33.39)

The word śraddhānvitah used in this verse from the Bhagavata specifically refers to the faith that leads to the attainment of spontaneous devotion. Sri Mahaprabhu has stressed that the Holy Name is replete with all transcendental potency, being non-different from the Supreme Person Sri Krishna. The Holy Name is pure, eternal, replete with all spiritual mellows and comparable to a wish-fulfilling tree. The process of attaining pure spontaneous devotion is by exclusive surrender to the lotus feet of the personified Name, praying to Him with complete yearning and taking to the chanting with fixed resolve. As the aspirant ceases committing offenses, the Holy Name awards him with the association of an eternal associate of the Lord in Vraja, a devotee who is completely absorbed in spontaneous love for the Lord. The blessings of the Holy Name are such that they make the impossible possible and put love of God within the grasp of even the most fallen aspirant. In Srila Visvanath Chakravarti Thakura’s commentary to the above verse from the Rasa-lila, it is written:

*ata eva śraddhānvita iti śāstrāviśvāsinam nāmāparādhinam premāpi
nāngīkarotīti bhāvah... ayam śrī-rāsaḥ śrīr api nāpa yam. śāstra-buddhi-
vivekādyair api durgamam īkṣyate gopinām rasa-vartmedam tāsām anugatī
vinā*

“The word śraddhānvitah indicates that ecstatic love for Krishna does not come to those who do not believe the scriptures or who persist in committing offenses against the Holy Name. Thus even Lakshmi cannot enter into this Rasa dance. Without exclusively following in the footsteps of the gopis, even those who

believe in the scriptures and are very intelligent cannot enter onto this most difficult path of sacred rapture chalked out by the gopis.”

For this reason, our most revered Srila Prabhupada never approved of open discussion by the unqualified of the divine rasa, which is beyond the attainment of even Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, and always gave priority to the chanting of the Holy Name. The following couplet by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur is enlightening in this regard:

vidhi-mārga-rata jane svādhīnatā ratna dāne rāga-mārge karān praveśa rāga-vaśavartī haiyā pārakīya bhāvāśraye labhe jīva kṛṣṇa-premāvēśa

“To the person fixed in the regulative principles, the Holy Name gives the jewel of independence, placing him on the path of spontaneous devotion. That person, overcome by spontaneous attachment to the Lord, takes shelter of the parakīyā mood and goes on to become absorbed in love for Krishna.” In his *Anuvṛtti* commentary to the 7th verse of Sri Rupa Goswamipada’s *Upadeśāmṛta*, Srila Prabhupada says: “The Holy Name and Krishna’s pastimes, etc., are compared to sugar candy, while ignorance is compared to excess bile. As a jaundiced person is unable to relish the flavor of sugar candy, similarly the eternally conditioned materialistic living entity is unable to taste the nectarean bliss of the Holy Name or Krishna’s pastimes due to the ignorance born of his reluctance to engage in devotional service. In taking to chanting the Holy Names sincerely and endeavoring with right efforts, that is, with faith (*śraddhānvita*), their sweetness becomes increasingly apparent and will eventually lead to the dissipation of the reluctance to engage in devotional service and the end of the disease of sense-gratification.” Further on, in his explanation of the 8th verse of *Upadeśāmṛta* where Sri Rupa gives “the essence of all instructions,” Srila Prabhupada writes: “The aspirant whose particular relation with the Lord has not yet been awakened should tame his outgoing and restless mind with the determined chanting of the holy names, pastimes, form and qualities of the Lord. Side by side, he should also remember the attributes of the Lord. As the aspirant’s attraction to a particular relation is awakened, he should go to live in Vraja and spend the rest of his life following a specific resident of the Lord’s abode. This is the essence of all instruction.” The first step of the aspirant’s devotional life is called *śravaṇa-daśā*: “the hearing stage.” In this stage, the devotee engages in constant hearing of Krishna’s names, form, qualities and pastimes, until he reaches the stage known as *varaṇa-daśā* (the stage of acceptance). In this stage, he starts to repeat or chant those things that he has previously heard.

When one chants constantly according to his own particular mood, he reaches the stage known as *smaraṇa-daśā*. Smaraṇa or remembering has five different stages: *smaraṇa* (“remembering”), *dhāraṇā* (“concentration”), *dhyāna*

(“meditation”), dhruvānusmṛti (“fixed and constant remembrance”), and samādhi (“trance”). The first of these, smaraṇa, is characterized by multiple distractions; the second, dhāraṇā, is remembrance without being distracted; the third, dhyāna, means meditation on every aspect of the object; constant meditation is called dhruvānusmṛti; and samādhi is meditation without interruptions of any kind. When one has passed through the smaraṇa-daśā he arrives at āpana-daśā, the state of attainment. In this stage, the aspirant knows his own spiritual identity. This is called svarūpa-siddhi. The next stage is called sampatti-daśā, or the “treasure stage” in which he achieves vastu-siddhi, or the actual perfection of joining the Lord’s eternal pastimes in a spiritual body. The Chaitanya Charitamrita states that the vaidha-bhakta gives up his desires for sense gratification and practices devotional service because he is ordained to do so by the scriptures. As such a devotee does so, his taste for devotion, or ruci, eventually awakens. Once this taste has been awakened, then he gives up the sense of obligation to the rules and regulations and simply worships Krishna’s lotus feet (vidhi-dharma chārī bhaje kṛṣṇera caraṇa).

rāgātmikā bhakti mukhyā vraja-vāsī jane tāra anugata bhaktira rāgānugā name

“The passionate devotion known as rāgātmikā bhakti is primarily found amongst the residents of Vrindavan. The devotional practice that follows their spirit is called rāgānugā bhakti.” (CC 2.22.144)

iṣṭe svārasikī rāgaḥ paramāviṣṭatā bhavet tanmayī yā bhaved bhaktih sātra rāgātmikoditā

“The intense and spontaneous absorption in the object of one’s adoration (iṣṭa) is called rāga. Devotion that is characterized by such rāga is called rāgātmikā bhakti.” (BRS 1.2.272)

*rāgamayī-bhaktira haya rāgātmikā nāma tāhā śuni lubdha haya kona
bhāgyavān lobhe vraja-vāsīra bhāve kare anugati śāstra-yukti nāhi māne
rāgānugāra prakṛti bāhya antara ihāra dui ta sādhana bāhye sādhaka-dehe kare
śravaṇa-kīrtana mane nija-siddha-deha kariyā bhāvana rātri-dine kare vraje
kṛṣṇera sevana*

“Devotional service pervaded by rāga is called rāgātmikā bhakti, spontaneous loving service. One is most fortunate if he covets such an attitude after hearing about it. If one follows in the footsteps of the inhabitants of Vrindavan out of such transcendental covetousness, he does not care for the injunctions or reasoning of scripture. That is the nature of the path that seeks spontaneous love. Rāgānugā bhakti is practiced both externally and internally. In the external body, the devotee acts as any other practitioner of devotional service and engages in hearing and chanting. In his mind, however, he meditates on his spiritual body

and serves Krishna there in Vrindavan, day and night.” (CC 2.22.151-3, 156-7)

sevā sādhaka-rūpeṇa siddha-rūpeṇa cātra hi tad-bhāva-lipsunā kāryā vraja-lokānusārataḥ

“The devotee who has intense desire to attain the rāgātmikā mood of one or the other Vrajavasi associates of Krishna should engage in the practices of devotional service in his external body as a practitioner and also internally in his spiritual body. In both cases he follows in the footsteps of the residents of Vraja.” (BRS 1.2.295; CC 2.22.158)

nijābhīṣṭa kṛṣṇa-preṣṭha pāche ta lāgiyā nirantara sevā kare antarmanā hañā

“In his mind, he constantly serves Krishna while adhering closely to His favorite devotee, one who is most dear to the Lord.” (CC 2.22.159)

kṛṣṇāṁ smaran janāṁ cāsyā preṣṭham nija-samīhitam tat-tat-kathā-rataś cāsau kuryād vāsam vraje sadā

“Remembering Krishna and one of His dearest and closest devotees, one should constantly remain absorbed in hearing about their loving relations. In this way, one should make one’s permanent residence in Vraja.” (BRS 1.2.294, CC 2.22.160)

The five principal relations are passivity, servitude, friendship, parental love and consorthood. Those people and things that have a relation with Krishna in the mood of passivity, śānta-rasa, include His cows, flute, the trees in Vraja, His stick and horn, etc. Those in the relation of servitude include Raktaka, Patraka, Chitraka and others. Krishna’s friends are Balaram, Sridama, Sudama and others. Krishna’s lovers are Radhika, Lalita, and so many others. Mental service to Krishna in Vraja under the direction of these eternal associates is the essence of all instructions.

First one must take shelter of a genuine spiritual master and then follow the spiritual path that he has delineated. If one does not do so, there is no possibility of entering into the esoteric aspects of devotional life. If an aspirant does not follow the directions of a genuine guru, then by prematurely entering into such matters, thinking that he is eligible for such esoteric understanding, his material attachments will simply increase and his spiritual life will be doomed. If one cannot transcend the material conception of life, then one will never become eligible to enter into the divine, spiritual plane. For this reason it is repeatedly stressed to those desiring to advance in bhajan that they should chant the Holy Name without offenses, for this is the way to attain love for Krishna—*niraparādha laile nāma pāya prema-dhana*. These are the words of the Lord Himself, so we should be especially careful to engage in the worship of the Holy

Name according to this instruction and then we can be confident that He will be merciful and give us the qualifications to cultivate absorption on His form, virtues and pastimes. Common people without any conception of the divine rasa, though under the thrall of material emotions of anger and lust, falsely present themselves as knowledgeable about these things and sing the songs of the ancient authorities who wrote about Krishna's transcendental pastimes, thus committing an unpardonable offense to them. Our most worshipable Srila Prabhupada could not tolerate this kind of participation in such activities by those who are completely unqualified. Those who exhibit mundane musical ability, but have no inner spiritual understanding of the pastimes, may make a show of distributing the sacred experience of rasa, but they will inevitably end up confusing the mundane and spiritual moods.

*avaiṣṇava-mukhodgīrṇāṁ pūtāṁ hari-kathāmr̥tam
śravaṇām naiva kartavyām sarpocchiṣṭām yathā payah*

“One should not hear the pure nectarean sounds of Krishna-kathā from the mouth of a non-Vaishnava any more than one should drink milk that has been touched by the lips of a serpent.” (Padma-purāṇa)

Scriptural statements like this show that those who participate in lila kirtan and other pseudo-devotional activities for the material sensual pleasure of hearing beautiful sounds do not gain any real spiritual benefit. Both the singer and the hearer become submerged in the ocean of anartha. If the entire tradition of lila kirtan or rasa-gāna should be lost to the world as a result, so be it. In the Hari-bhakti-vilāsa, it is stated:

*gīta-nṛtyāni kurvīta deva-dvijādi-tuṣṭaye na
jīvanāya yuñjīta vipro pāpa-bhiyā kvacit*

“One may engage in song and dance for the pleasure of the deity and the brahmins, but a brahmin should never use song and dance to make a living, for fear of committing sin.” (HBV 8.265)

Engaging in musical activity to make a living is just another kind of sense gratification. The Bhagavata also says that one should not make a living from teaching the scriptures (SB 7.13.8—na vyākhyām upayuñjīta). One should not use the most precious spiritual subject matter as a means to making a living as though it were just another ordinary tool or medium of trade. Srila Prabhupada considered this to be particularly detestable. Throughout his life, he vehemently protested against those who displayed the Lord's forms, gave mantra initiation, or distributed prasad and charanamrita as means of making a livelihood. Because of this, his preaching was not particularly appreciated in certain devotee circles.

Even though the ritualistic priests (Smartas) may hold a different opinion, Srila Sanatan Goswami, a main leader or acharya of the Madhva Gaudiya line, has confirmed that all persons, irrespective of caste, can be elevated by the process of spiritual initiation (diksha) to perform the worship of the Salagram Sila deity.

vinītān atha putrādīn saṁskṛtya pratibodhayet

“One should instruct one’s submissive sons and disciples [in deity worship] after purifying them with the appropriate ritual (saṁskāra).” According to this injunction, an initiated Vaishnava, who is praised by even the gods like Shiva, can be given the upanayana-saṁskāra, or brahminical initiation, as well as the five rites or saṁskāras of spiritual initiation, known as tāpa, puṇḍra, nāma, mantra, yāga:

tāpah puṇḍras tathā nāma mantro yāgaś ca pañcamah

amī hi pañca-saṁskārāḥ paramaikānta-hetavah

“The five purificatory processes that lead to single-minded devotion are: (1) tāpa, branding with the symbols of Vishnu; (2) puṇḍra, the tilak markings appropriate to the disciplic line; (3) nāma, a name symbolizing the disciple’s relationship to Krishna; (4) the mantra, and (5) yāga, or sacrifice for the sake of Vishnu.” (Padma-purāṇa)

In his holy treatise Prameya-ratnāvalī, Srila Baladeva Vidyabhushan has defined the word yāga in the above verse as deity worship. Many of Mahaprabhu’s associates, though being of other castes (such as vaidya, karaṇa or kāyastha), wore the sacred thread after initiation and took brahmin disciples. The scripture says that through initiation, one becomes twice-born or, in other words, a brahmin (dīkṣā-vidhānena dvijatvam jāyate nr̄ṇām). This applies to everyone. Srila Prabhupada held this statement as the foundation of the daivavarnāśrama system. Every human being has a right to engage in devotion (bhaktau nr̄-mātrasyādhikāritā). Therefore it is said, *caṇḍālo’pi dvija-śreṣṭhaḥ hari-bhakti-parāyanāḥ hari-bhakti-vihīnaś ca dvijo’pi śvapacādhamah* “An outcaste is the best of the twice-born if he is devoted to Lord Hari. On the other hand, one who has no devotion is worse than an outcaste, even if born as a brahmin.”

Testimonies such as these indicate the supremacy of devotion. Devotion is the eternal activity of the soul. Anyone in whom this activity is observed should be revered as much as a person who is born in the priestly caste. For this reason Vrindavan Das Thakur wrote:

je te kule vaisṇavera janma kene nahe tathāpiha sarvottama sarva-śāstra kahe

“All the scriptures say that Vaishnavas are the best of humanity, no matter what

their status at birth.” (Cbh 2.10.100)

Srila Krishna Das Kaviraja Goswami’s famous verses on the subject in Chaitanya Charitamrita read as follows:

nīca-jāti nahe kṛṣṇa-bhajane ayoga sat-kula-vipra nahe bhajanera yogya jei bhaje sei bāra abhakta hīna chāra kṛṣṇa-bhajane nāhi jāti-kulādi-vicāra

“A person born in a low family is not unfit for discharging devotional service to Krishna, nor is one fit for devotional service simply because he is born in an aristocratic family of brahmins. Anyone who takes to devotional service is exalted, whereas a non-devotee is always condemned and abominable. Therefore in the discharge of devotional service to the Lord, there is no consideration of one’s family status.” (CC 3.4.66-7)

According to those who consider the law of karma to be the most important principle, the principles of daiva-varṇāśrama society are not acceptable, but rather one in which the socio-religious hierarchies are determined by birth alone. The Padma-purāṇa states very clearly that anyone who looks at a Vaishnava in terms of his caste or bodily identity is of a hellish mentality. Once, a huge public debate was organized in Baligha, Midnapore, to debate the relative positions of brahmins and Vaishnavas. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur was still alive at that time, but was playing the role of an ordinary mortal bedridden with illness. Being unable to go himself, he sent Srila Prabhupada as his representative, empowering him to protect the dignity of the Vaishnavas. The meeting was presided over by Sri Madhusudana Goswami Sarvabhauma and Sri Visvambharananda Deva Goswami of Gopiballabhpur. Srila Prabhupada delivered an erudite lecture in which he explained both concepts in great detail, ultimately proving uncompromisingly the superiority of the Vaishnavas over born brahmins. His speech was later published as a book, Brāhmaṇa o Vaiṣṇava tāratamya-viṣayaka siddhānta (“The correct understanding of the relative positions of Brahmins and Vaishnavas”). The conclusion was that an initiated devotee engaged wholeheartedly in the worship of the deity is worshipable to even a brahmin. Mahaprabhu could not tolerate transgressions of etiquette. All people should therefore be joyful to hear that a Vaishnava has a higher status than anyone of any other caste or race. Certainly a saintly brahmin is to be highly regarded and everyone should therefore give such a person his due respect. But Lord Krishna says that worship of the devotee is dearer to Him than even His own worship. Of course, a brahmin who has become a devotee of the Lord should also be respected as a devotee. Srila Prabhupada considered the printing press an important tool for the wide publicity and propagation of Mahaprabhu’s teachings. He would refer to it as the “Big Drum” (bṛhat mṛdaṅga) because its

sound could not only travel great distances, but reverberate for a greater length of time. Srila Prabhupada gained much experience in proof-reading and other press-related work in his boyhood while assisting his father, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur, produce his publications. Later, when he established his own press, first at Shangar, then at Mayapur, Krishnagar, Ultadingi Junction Road and Bagh Bazaar, he published many books and periodicals including the monthly Harmonist, the weekly Gauḍīya, Sajjana-toṣanī, Bhagavad Gita with commentary, Chaitanya Charitamrita, Chaitanya-māñ-gala, Chaitanya Bhagavata, Jaiva Dharma, Caitanya-śiksāmṛta, Mahaprabhura Śikṣā, Śikṣāṣṭaka, Upadeśāmṛta, Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu, ŚrīKṛṣṇa-saṁhitā, Śaraṇāgati, Kalyāṇa-kalpa-taru, Gītāvalī, Gīti-mālā, Sat-kriyāsāra-dīpikā, Śrī-Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, etc.

It is worth taking special note of Srila Prabhupada's exemplary service to Sri Dham Mayapur, the transcendental birthplace of Lord Gaura hari. Srila Prabhupada underwent many mystical experiences at the Yoga Pith and Srivas Angan. He beheld the Saraswati River in the Jalangi, and the currents of the three sacred rivers, the Saraswati, Yamuna and Ganges, all flowing constantly within the Ganges itself. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur wrote of a similar vision in some of his songs, such as Kabe gaura-vane suradhunī-taṭe, where he says, "When will I beg rice from an outcaste household and drink water from the Saraswati River?" The confluence of the river Saraswati and Ganges in Mayapur (Triveni) was especially dear to him. With the help of a wealthy disciple, the late Sakhi Charan Bhakti Vijaya, Srila Prabhupada fulfilled Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur's prediction of an extraordinary temple being built at Sri Yoga Pith.

When the foundation of the skyscraper temple was being dug, on June 13, 1934, a four-armed deity of Vishnu was discovered in the ground. Srila Prabhupada studied the Siddhārtha-saṁhitā and, according to the positioning of the weapons and symbols in the deity's hands, identified it as Adhokshaja Vishnu accompanied by His Śrī, Bhū and Nīla potencies. Several expert archeologists, including Sri Ram Prasad Chanda, attested to the deity's antiquity. Srila Prabhupada commented later that this was the deity formerly worshiped by Sri Jagannath Mishra himself. This beautiful deity is currently being worshiped at the Yoga Pith temple in Mayapur. Formerly, a jackfruit tree stood on the site of the current Yoga Pith temple. I personally had the good fortune to taste some of the delicious, juice-filled fruit from that tree. Our parama gurudeva, Gaura Kishor Das Babaji often used to come to sit and chant beneath this tree. In those days, Prabhupada himself used to live in the servants' quarters in the Yoga Pith compound, a building that has since been razed. On one occasion Prabhupada woke up late at night and saw Babaji Maharaj sitting under the tree performing his bhajan. Babaji Maharaj made his home in a bamboo shelter in Ranir Chora, on the other side of the river in Nabadwip town. Prabhupada wondered when he

had come and why he had come at such an unusual hour. The last ferry normally crossed the Ganges at 10 o'clock and Babaji Maharaj had almost completely lost his sight, or at least was undergoing the pretense of having such a deficiency in a mortal body. The road from the ferry dock would have been practically impassable for him, but who could have brought him there at this time of night? Prabhupada asked Babaji Maharaj all these questions and Maharaj simply answered, " 'Somebody' took me across the river. Then 'somebody' took me by the hand and brought me here." It did not take long for Prabhupada to understand that this "somebody" was no ordinary person.

Gaura Kishor Das Babaji used to come frequently to roll in the dust at the Yoga Pith and at Srivas Angan, ecstatically crying out the names of the Pancha Tattva or loudly chanting the Maha Mantra. If Prabhupada sent him any fruit or vegetable that had been grown there, Babaji Maharaj would touch it to his forehead and his heart and then offer it to his Gaura-Nitai deities before honoring it as prasad. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur installed deities of Gaura and Vishnupriya at the Yoga Pith in the Bengali year 1300 (1894). A small temple was built to house the deities through a large number of small donations. Facing this temple was a bamboo and thatch-roofed shelter for kirtans and lectures. The annual meetings of the Navadvīpa-dhāma-pracāriṇī Sabhā were held in this structure. Many scholars and gentlemen came there from Kuliya (the present-day city of Nabadwip) and Baman Pukur to attend these meetings. The independent prince of Tripura was the permanent chairman of these meetings, while Prabhupada was the acting director. Every year, scholars and devotees proclaimed the glories of Mahaprabhu's holy land. This annual meeting continues to be held at the Yoga Pith on Mahaprabhu's appearance day. To enlighten others and increase publicity about the Holy Dham, Srila Prabhupada invited time and again many eminent and dignified people such as the Maharajah of Tripura and the then governor of Bengal, Sir John Anderson, to Mayapur. Every year was highlighted by the Nabadwip parikrama, in which the devotees visited all the important holy places throughout the 16-kros land of Nabadwip. This was followed by the birth-anniversary celebrations of Mahaprabhu. Srila Prabhupada had planned that all the land from Chandrasekhara Bhavan in the north to Hulore Ghat at the extreme south should be known as "Greater Mayapur." We often heard his prophecy that one day this entire area would become a city of Krishna devotees filled with many temples and monasteries and the auspicious sounds of gongs, bells, drums and the chanting of the names of the Lord. Srila Prabhupada used to remark that Lord Gaurasundara was eternally performing congregational chanting and dancing with His associates in this holy land of Mayapur.

*adyāpiha sei līlā kare gorā rāya kono kono bhāgyavāne dekhibāre pāya
andhibhūta cakṣu jāra viṣaya dhūlite kirūpe se para-tattva pāibe dekhite*

“Lord Gauranga still engages in His pastimes here today. Some very fortunate souls are able to see them. How can those whose eyes have been deprived of their sight by the dust of sense desire ever see this Supreme Truth?”

Even today, many fortunate people have heard the mystical sounds of gongs and drums accompanying many voices joined together in sankirtan at the Yoga Pith or Srivas Angan in Mayapur. Srila Prabhupada personally experienced this many a time. We ourselves have observed the transformation of ordinary materialistic persons whose hearts have been hardened by the false arguments of worldly scholars after they come to Mayapur, particularly the Yoga Pith. It is as though they cannot resist the spiritual influence of the site. Their argumentativeness comes to a halt and they feel obliged to lower their heads, in humility. Only those who have committed so many offenses to the Holy Name and to the Dham, those who are hard-hearted and filled with envy, are deprived of devotion and faith in the divine abode. They become faultfinders, and as the saying goes, “Even in a jeweled palace, ants only see the holes” (maṇi-maya-mandira-madhye paśyati pipīlikā chidram). Therefore Krishna Das Kaviraja Goswami wrote that everyone was washed away in the flood of love started by Chaitanya Mahaprabhu—with the exception of the quarrelsome impersonalists and atheists, who fled it in fear.

*uchalila prema-vanyā cau-dike berāya strī vrddha bālaka yuvā sabāre ḍubāya
saj-jana durjana paṅgu jaḍa andha-gaṇa prema-vanyāya ḍubāila jagatera jana*

“The flood of love for Krishna swelled in all directions, and everyone—men, women and children of all ages—were inundated by it. The flood of love for Krishna immersed everyone in the entire world, regardless of whether they were gentlemen, rogues, lame, invalid or blind.” (CC 1.7.25-6)

*māyāvādī karma-niṣṭha kutārkika-gaṇa nindaka pāṣāṇdī jata paruwā adhama
sei saba mahā-dakṣa dhāñā palāila sei vanyā tā-sabāre chunite nārila*

“The mayavadis, fruitive workers, the argumentative, blasphemers, atheists and inferior students were very expert in avoiding the flood of prema. They ran away and so it could not touch them.” (CC 1.7.29-30)

Besides discovering numerous lost sites of Mahaprabhu’s pastimes, Srila Prabhupada did many other things to increase the glories of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu’s holy land. In particular, on March 18, 1927, he established the Para-vidyā-pīṭha, or “School of Divine Knowledge” to glorify Mahaprabhu, the husband of the transcendental goddess of learning. Subjects taught at this institution included Jiva Goswami’s grammar, Harināmāṁṛta-vyākaraṇa, all

aspects of the Vedic literature including the Sruti, Smriti, Nyāya, Prasthāna, etc.

Of course, particular attention was given to the study of the Srimad Bhagavatam and other devotional scriptures. He also established a similar institution for the study of devotional life called the Anukūla-kṛṣṇānuśīlanāgāra (“School for the favorable culture of Krishna”) in 1936. Similarly a high-class Englishlanguage school for spiritual instruction, the Bhaktivinode Institute, was opened in 1931.

Later on, the Bhaktivinode Institute was made into a “higher secondary” school. On March 7, 1918, on the auspicious occasion of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu’s appearance day, the deities of Guru-Gauranga and Radha-Govinda were consecrated at the house of Chandrasekhara Acharya and the Sri Chaitanya Math was established. Five years later, work began on the construction of a 29-spire temple at Chaitanya Math. It was built according to the idea of Srila Prabhupada in which the deities of Guru-Gauranga and Radha-Govinda would be installed in the main deity room, while in the four corners the founders of the four sampradayas (Lakshmi, Brahma, Rudra, and the four Kumaras) with their acharyas (Ramanuja, Madhva, Vishnu Swami, and Nimbarka) would be installed. The main branch of Chaitanya Math was the Calcutta Gaudiya Math. It was first established in 1920 at 1 Ultadingi Junction Road.

In 1930, it was moved to the newly built temple in Bagh Bazaar. Many other branches were opened throughout India during Prabhupada’s lifetime. As discussed, Srila Prabhupada worked tirelessly to propagate the pure devotional message of Sriman Mahaprabhu through books and journals. He established four main printing presses in Calcutta, Krishnagar, Mayapur and Cuttack. From these and other presses, my godbrothers printed over 100 books and different monthly, bi-monthly, weekly, and even daily journals in the English, Bengali, Oriya and Assamese languages. They also made unimaginable efforts to preach and give lecture and kirtan programs through the length and breadth of India; many also went to foreign countries to preach under his bidding. Srila Prabhupada thus made the fulfillment of the desires of Lord Chaitanya and that of His divine manifestation, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur, the primary purpose of his life. Nevertheless, he never failed to maintain his daily vow of chanting one lakh or 64 rounds of the Lord’s names and instructed all his disciples to do likewise. He also told us to be careful about laxity in our worship of the Holy Name. Along with this, we must organize our time so that we can also study and write books and articles and engage in preaching activities.

He would say, “Be careful, brother, that not a day goes by without the Holy Name” (dekho bhāi, nāma vinā dina nāhi jāya). Those given the responsibility for a particular aspect of this service would come and meet with Prabhupada, leaving him inspired and enthusiastic. Whenever Srila Prabhupada became

aware of a text or discourse attacking the doctrine of pure devotion, he would immediately call one of his scholarly disciples to write a refutation of such opposing arguments. He was like a bright and fiery sun that destroyed the darkness of misapprehension of the Lord's doctrine and had an incomparable ability to still the tongues of his opponents. He detested those who accepted adjustment or compromise with deviant philosophies on the principle of mutual permissiveness as exemplified in the Hindi saying, tum bhī cup, ham bhī cup —“You say nothing and I'll say nothing.” Prabhupada was the perfect personification of the statement, nirapekṣa nā haile dharma nā jāya rakṣaṇe —“Religious principles cannot be maintained unless one is uncompromising” (CC 3.3.23).

Prabhupada never supported the idea that one could protect pure devotion while compromising with the nonsense of heterodox doctrine or the unharmonious combination of devotional sentiments (rasābhāsa). He kept a strict code of behavior according to the instruction of Sriman Mahaprabhu.

asat-saṅga-tyāga ei vaiṣṇava ācāra strī-saṅgī eka asādhu kṛṣṇābhakta āra

“The behavior of the devotee is characterized by complete avoidance of bad association, i.e., that of the materialistic sense-enjoyers and the non-devotee atheists.” (CC 3.12.195)

tato duḥsaṅgam utsṛjya satsu sajjeta buddhimān

santa evāsyā chindanti mano-vyāsaṅgam uktibhiḥ

“An intelligent person should therefore abandon all bad association and stay in the company of devotees. Only such holy persons can cut through one's unhealthy mental attachments with their powerful words.” (SB 11.26.26)

As long as there is no effulgent acharya with such power, the Gaudiya Vaishnava world finds itself endangered and helpless. Other than he, who will stand up to injustice, taking up the pen with a lion's courage or giving lectures like a lion's roar? We pray to Srila Prabhupada, the manifestation of Baladeva, to protect us and give us the spiritual strength we need to maintain our spiritual life, for the Upanishads say: “No one realizes the atman without strength” (nāyam ātmā bala-hīnena labhyah). Srila Prabhupada had extraordinary knowledge about the secrets of the disciplic succession. He began the compilation of the Vaiṣṇava-mañjuṣā dictionary of Vaishnava terminology and other necessary information. Four fascicules of the dictionary came out between 1922 and 1925, but the fifth volume was only partially completed. His powers of recall were astounding. Every time he lectured, he would introduce many fresh and interesting details with such skill that the audience would be left spell-bound. We would try to note

all these ideas with a deft hand, but would still miss many points. Later, we would bring the notes in article form and Srila Prabhupada would personally correct them. Many of these lectures were published in the weekly Gauḍīya magazine. Prabhupada's extraordinary scholarship was evident even in "Baṅge Samājikatā" ("Bengali social traditions"), an early article he published in 1900 when he was only 26 years old. In this article he criticized many social customs and religious sects.

In 1886, Prabhupada wrote an account of the life of Prahlad in five chapters of Bengali verse. And, of course, he had unequalled astrological knowledge. At one time, he published two monthly magazines on the subject: Bṛhaspati ("Jupiter") and Jyotirvit ("The Astrologer"). He also published a number of books on astrology. When he became fully dedicated to spiritual life, Srila Prabhupada interrupted his study of this subject and put all his efforts into writing and publishing spiritual literature. Prabhupada wrote many in-depth and well-researched articles on devotional subjects for Bhaktivinoda Thakur's Sajjana-toṣaṇī monthly magazine. He studied the important texts of all the four Vaishnava schools, especially the Śrī-bhāṣya, Prapannāmrta and other books of the Ramanuja sampradaya. He learned a great deal about the institution of *tridaṅda-sannyāsa* from many important and learned renunciates of that school.

Starting in 1899, he published a series of articles on Srinath Muni, Yamunacharya, Ramanuja, Divyasuri or Alwar, Goda Devi, the eligibility for pāñcarātrika practices, the dust of the lotus feet of the devotee, Kulashekha, Vishnuchitta and other subjects connected to the Ramanuja line. Prabhupada also had a scholar of Veda and Vedanta, Admar Bitthalacharya, brought to Mayapur from the main center of the Madhva school at Udupi. He then had us learn Brahma-sūtras, Chāndogya and Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣads, Trivikramacharya's life history of Madhvacharya (Sri-Madhva-vijaya), Nyāyasudhā, Dvādaśa-stotra and other works of the sampradaya. Prabhupada also had Pandit Bitthalacharya write a Vaishnava commentary on the eleven principal Upanishads (*Īśa, Kena, Kaṭha, Praśna, Muṇḍaka, Māṇḍukya, Aittareya, Taittiriya, Chāndogya*, and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*).

Unfortunately, this commentary was lost sometime after Prabhupada's disappearance and no one has been able to find it. Many important historical details about the different Vaishnava schools can be found in Prabhupada's commentaries on the Chaitanya Bhagavata, Chaitanya Charitamrita, and Srimad Bhagavatam. Srila Prabhupada wished to publish the Govinda-bhāṣya, the Bhāgavata-purāṇa's Tenth Canto, —at-sandarbha and Sarva-saṁvādinī along with his own commentaries, but he was so involved with other tasks that he was never able to fulfill these wishes. Mayavada is a doctrine that opposes devotion to Krishna. Srila Prabhupada found it quite unbearable to even hear the name of

this philosophy.

Mahaprabhu cautioned, *jīvera nistāra lāgi sūtra kaila vyāsa
māyāvādi-bhāṣya śunile haya sarva-nāśa*

“Vyasadeva wrote the Vedanta sutras for the salvation of the living entities, but if they hear the interpretation of the mayavadis, they will go to ruin.” (CC 2.6.169)

*vaiṣṇava hañā jebā Śārīraka-bhāṣya śune sevyā-sevaka-bhāva chāri āpanāre
īśvara māne mahā-bhāgavata jei kṛṣṇa prāṇa-dhana jāra māyāvāda-śravaṇe
citta avaśya phire tānra*

“When a Vaishnava listens to Shankara’s Śārīraka-bhāṣya, the mayavada commentary upon Vedanta Sutra, he gives up making a distinction between master and servant and considers himself the Supreme Lord. Hearing the mayavada philosophy will unfailingly change the consciousness of even a mahābhāgavata devotee, whose life and soul is Krishna.” (CC 3.2.95-6)

*prabhu kahe māyāvādī kṛṣṇe aparādhī brahma ātmā caitanya kahe niravadhi
ataeva tāra mukhe nā āise kṛṣṇa-nāma kṛṣṇa-nāma kṛṣṇa-svarūpa duita
samāna*

“Mayavadi impersonalists are offenders to Krishna. They constantly repeat words like Brahman, atman and caitanya. As a result, they are unable to utter Krishna’s holy name. Krishna’s name and essence are the same.” (CC 2.17.129130)

ataeva kṛṣṇa-nāma nā āise tāra mukhe māyāvādi-gaṇa yāte mahā bahir-mukhe

“Therefore the holy name of Krishna does not come from the mouths of the mayavadis, for they are completely opposed to the Lord.” (CC 2.17.143)

Many people contend that after receiving the mercy of Lord Chaitanya, the mayavadi Sri Prakashananda Saraswati became known as Sri Prabodhananda Saraswati, the author of Śrī-Rādhā-rasa-sudhā-nidhi and other devotional books. This contention was vehemently rejected by Srila Prabhupada. In his Anubhāṣya (2.17.115), Srila Prabhupada explained: “The spiritual master and uncle of Sri Gopal Bhatta Goswami, Srila Prabodhananda Saraswati, used to live in Sri Rangam and was a tridaṇḍī-sannyāsi in the Ramanuja sampradaya. He is not to be confused with his contemporary Prakashananda Saraswati who was an eka-daṇḍī sannyasi of the Shankaracharya sect living in Benares.”

Prabhupada also wrote on Prakashananda in several places, such as his comments on Chaitanya Charitamrita 2.7.62, 2.7.65 and 2.17.104-143, where he

tells about his character before meeting Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. For information about his activities after receiving the Lord's mercy, one can look at Chaitanya Charitamrita 2.25.5-160, as well as Chaitanya Bhagavata, Madhya-khaṇḍa 3 and 20.

Prabodhananda Saraswati's Rādhā-rasa-sudhā-nidhi is an invaluable jewel for the Gaudiya Vaishnavas. Nowadays, other Vaishnava schools claim this book as their own production. If Srila Prabhupada were present today, he would be able to resolve this problem. In the morning before his entrance into the Lord's eternal pastimes, Srila Prabhupada requested Srimad Bhakti Rakshaka Sridhar Maharaj to sing Narottama Das Thakur's Śrī Rūpa-mañjarī-pada and Navina Krishna Vidyalankara to sing Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur's Tuḥu dayā-sāgara tārayite prāṇī, written on the basis of the second verse of the Śikṣāṣṭaka. By asking for the first song to be sung, Srila Prabhupada was underlining the importance of the instructions he had given a week earlier on December 23.

He thus revealed his personal commitment to the leadership of Sri Rupa and Raghunath Goswamis, as well as indicating the esoteric aspect of his own devotional life. With it, he also signaled the true identity of our sampradaya. The Śikṣāṣṭaka song contains the following verse:

*tuwā dayā aichana parama udārā atiśaya manda nātha bhāga hāmārā nāhi
janamala nāme anurāga mora bhaktivinoda citta duḥkha vibhora*

“How great, O Lord, is Your mercy; how great Your supreme generosity! And how distressingly unfortunate am I: I have developed no affection for chant-ing Your holy name. Bhaktivinoda Thakur’s mind is filled with distress.” (Gītāvalī, Śikṣāṣṭaka, 2)

On hearing these verses, Srila Prabhupada clasped his hands to his forehead and profuse tears of humility rolled down his cheeks. These personal gestures were meant to remind us of our lamentable plight in not having any attraction for the Holy Name. The Name has all potency and is not dependent on time or the purity of the chanter. It is only through attachment and diligent worship of the Holy Name that we can gain the wealth of rāgānugā bhakti. Out of affection for his disciples, Srila Prabhupada repeated his instruction from December 23:

“Narottama Das Thakur has explained Rupa and Raghunath’s spiritual understanding. It is best to follow that understanding.”

“I give all of you my blessings, whether you are present here or somewhere far away. Remember that our only duty and religion is to preach service to the Lord and His devotees.” Srila Prabhupada, our most worshipable spiritual master, has bestowed his affectionate blessings not only on the handful of people who

became his disciples, but also to his grand-disciples and all those who will come to this line of disciplic succession in the future. There is no cause for loss of hope or fear, for Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur's disciplic line will never cease. This is the assurance of Srila Prabhupada, the world teacher. He is eternally present among us. He is our Lord not only for this birth; He is our Lord birth after birth. Prabhupada's direct blessings are our great assurance and our only source of strength. Those following in his footsteps should take his merciful instructions on their heads in mutual cooperation and accept Sri Radha's eternal dear one and foremost follower of Srila Rupa Goswami, Srila Prabhupada, as their center. All perfections will be attained on pleasing Sri Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada. Rupa Goswami also listed the first steps of devotional life as follows:

guru-padāśrayas tasmāt kṛṣṇa-dīksādi-śikṣāṇam viśrambhena guroḥ sevā

“First take shelter of a spiritual master, then take initiation and instruction from him. Then serve the spiritual master with faith and devotion.” (BRS 1.2.74)

Many other proverbial sayings were dear to Prabhupada, such as saṅgha-śaktih kalau yuge—“In the age of Kali, there is strength in numbers.” āra kāli kene?—“Don't put off 'til tomorrow what you can do today.” tūrṇam yateta—“get down to the business of spiritual life immediately” (SB 11.9.29).

Give up (udapāsy) all pride and egoism, anger, hatred, jealousy, resentment, and other faults and accept the verdict of the devotee Bhagavata and the book Bhagavata. O brothers, come. We will surrender ourselves to the feet of our spiritual master and Sri Gauranga. We will bathe our entire being in the nectar of the Holy Name and announce the victory of the Holy Name to the entire world, which is immersed in the three-fold material sufferings. We shall raise the Holy Name's flag of victory. If we can do this, then the conflagration of material life will be extinguished and the cooling rays of the moonlight of the ultimate good will shine upon us. True peace will descend on the world.

The Meaning of Vyasa Puja

māghī kṛṣṇā-pañcamī is the auspicious appearance day or tithi of our most worshipable spiritual master, Nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa Om Viṣṇupāda Aṣṭottaraśata-śrī Srimad Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur. All our maṭhas take special

care to properly observe this festival every year. We call the appearance day of our spiritual master, Sri Sri Vyasa Puja. The full-moon day of the month of Asharh (June-July) is also popularly known as Guru Purnima. We have heard it said that this is actually the birthday of the divine incarnation, Sri Veda Vyasa. Therefore, all schools of religious thought that claim to follow Vyasa worship Him on that day, which is therefore also called Vyasa Puja. Members of the Gaudiya Math, however, consider their guru to be nondifferent in principle from Vyasadeva; they therefore observe his birthday by worshiping him with guru puja and they call this ceremony Vyasa Puja. The non-dual supreme truth Vrajendranandan, in His incarnation as Lord Gaurasundara, instituted the tradition of worshipping the spiritual master when He performed Vyasa Puja to Nityananda Prabhu, who is Balaram Himself, at Srivas Angan. In the Gaudiya Math, the first Vyasa Puja took place on February 24, 1924, when Srila Prabhupada's disciples celebrated his fiftieth birthday. This festival took place at No. 1, Ultadingi Junction Road in Calcutta. The Sanskrit word *vyāsa* means to divide, to expand or to distribute. Because he divided the one Veda into four parts, the *R̥g*, *Sāma*, *Yajur* and *Artharva-vedas*, and also expanded the explanation of the Vedic knowledge in works like Mahabharata and other histories and Puranas, the sage Sri Krishna Dvaipayana was given the title *Veda Vyasa*. In his Chaitanya Charitamrita, Krishna Das Kaviraja Goswami wrote that the same title could be given to Vrindavan Das Thakur:

kṛṣṇa-līlā bhāgavate kahe veda-vyāsa caitanya-līlāra vyāsa vṛindāvana-dāsa

“Veda Vyasa narrated the pastimes of Krishna in the Bhagavatam. Vrindavan Das Thakur performed the duties of Vyasadeva in recounting the pastimes of Chaitanya.” (CC 1.8.34)

bhāgavate kṛṣṇa-līlā varṇilā veda-vyāsa caitanya-līlāte vyāsa vṛndāvana-dāsa

“Veda Vyasa described Krishna’s pastimes in the Bhagavatam. The Vyasa of Chaitanya lila is Vrindavan Das Thakur.” (CC 1.19.55)

Just as Vrindavan Das was given the title “Vyasa” for expanding the descriptions of Chaitanya’s lila in the Chaitanya Bhagavata, the spiritual master similarly performs the work of Vyasadeva by distributing knowledge of the Lord to the conditioned living entities. For this reason the adoration offered to him on his advent is called “Vyasa Puja.” The “Vyasa Puja” pastimes of Sriman Mahaprabhu have been described by Vrindavan Das Thakur in the fifth chapter of the Madhya-khaṇḍa in the Chaitanya Bhagavata and commented on by our most worshippable Srila Prabhupada in his *Gauḍīya-bhāṣya*: “The Sruti says that from the moment one feels detachment, one is given respite from material sense enjoyment and attains a taste for devotional service to the Lord. There is no preordained time or place for this to occur. Someone who has lost all interest

in sense gratification becomes a homeless wanderer (parivrājaka) until he takes shelter of the lotus feet of a spiritual master. The words ‘Vyasa Puja’ mean nothing more than this acceptance of shelter or surrender at the lotus feet of the spiritual master. The institution is obligatory for all the four stages of life, but those in the renounced order are warned to be especially dutiful in carrying it out. “The servitors at the Gaudiya Math annually take up the performance of the Vyasa Puja with a spirit of pride. They set aside the krṣṇā pañcamī tithi of the month of Magh as the special occasion for this performance. Traditions for celebrating Vyasa Puja vary somewhat in different religious schools. Brahmins in any of the four ashrams (brahma-cārī, grha-stha, vānaprastha or sannyāsa) are all said to be under the shelter of Vyasa, their guru. As a result, performing Vyasa Puja forms a part of their daily ritual service. The actual Vyasa Puja celebration as an annual festival day is meant to serve as a special occasion to remember one’s own spiritual master. “Vyasa Puja also means offering everything to the service of the spiritual master in the form of works conducive to the fulfillment of his wishes. For this reason, our predecessor spiritual master, Srila Narottama Das Thakur, setting an example for us in the role of a follower of Rupa Goswami, humbly prayed to our principle guru:

śrī-caitanya-mano’bhīṣṭham sthāpitam yena bhūtale

so’yam rūpah kadā mahyam dadāti sva-padāntikam

“ ‘When will Sri Rupa Goswami, who has fulfilled the wishes of Lord Chaitanya on this earth, give me shelter under his lotus feet?’ (Prema-bhakti-candrikā)

“The most merciful of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu’s pastimes was to bestow love for Krishna; whatever Srila Rupa Goswami set aside for his followers as medicine for the disease of disinterest in the Lord’s service is the ideal gift to be given the guru on the occasion of Vyasa Puja. Vyasa Puja thus ultimately means the same mood of surrender and faith to the predecessor spiritual masters.”
(Gauḍīya-bhāṣya 2.5.8-10)

Mahaprabhu came to bestow the gift of devotion in the unnata-ujjvala-rasa, that is, the most elevated taste of the “effulgent” (ujjvala) or divine erotic mood that was never given by the Lord in any of His previous incarnations. Lord Gaurasundara is the combined form of Radha and Madhava—He is the son of Nanda Maharaj, who has taken the mood and bodily hue of Srimati Radharani. Is there anyone other than He who could reveal this most confidential wealth of devotional practice? And this Lord empowered His dearest personal associate, Srila Rupa Goswami, and caused a perfect understanding of all aspects of spiritual knowledge to awaken in him. Therefore, Srila Krishna Das Kaviraja Goswami said, *śrī-rūpa-hṛdaye prabhu śakti sañcārilā sarva-tattva nirūpiyā*

pravīṇa karilā “The Lord filled Rupa’s heart with spiritual power. He explained all the aspects of devotional doctrine to Rupa and made him expert.” (CC 2.19.117) Kavi Karnapur, the son of Mahaprabhu’s beloved associate, Shivananda Sena, wrote two excellent verses in his play, Caitanya-candrodaya-nāṭaka, which describe the blessings that the Lord showered on Rupa Goswami:

*kālena vrndāvana-keli-vārtā lupteti tāṁ khyāpayitum
viśiṣya kṛpāmrtenābhiṣiṣeca devas tatraiva rūpam ca sanātanam ca*

“In the course of time, the tidings of Krishna’s divine sports in Vrindavan had been lost. To reveal them again in detail, the Lord gave installments of His mercy to Sri Rupa and Sri Sanatan in the holy land of Vrindavan.” (CCN 9.38)

*priya-svarūpe dayita-svarūpe prema-svarūpe
sahajābhīrūpe nijānurūpe prabhur eka-rūpe tatāna rūpe sva-vilāsa-rūpe*

“The Lord explained the rasa-śāstra to Rupa Goswami in a way He did to no other person, for Rupa was the dear friend of Svarupa Damodar. His true identity was that of the Lord’s beloved, divine love was his intrinsic nature, and he also possessed natural beauty. Mahaprabhu knew him to be like unto Himself, and indeed, he was verily the expansion of the Lord.”(CCN 9.39)

In this way, Kavi Karnapur described the way in which Mahaprabhu blessed Rupa and Sanatan in his play Caitanya-candrodaya. These two great devotees were also great favorites of all of the Lord’s associates. If ever anyone went to Vrindavan, Mahaprabhu would eagerly ask for news about the brothers, about what they were eating, and how they were performing austerities and their bhajan.

*mahāprabhura jata bāra bāra bhakta mātra rūpa-sanātana sabāra krpā-
gaurava-pātra keha jadi deśe jāya dekhi vrndāvana tānre praśna karena
prabhura pāriṣada-gaṇa kaha tāhān kaiche rahe rūpa-sanātana kaiche rahe
kaiche vairāgya kaiche bhojana kaiche aṣṭa-prahara karena śrī-kṛṣṇa-bhajana
tabe praśāmsiyā kahe sei bhakta-gaṇa aniketa duñhe vane jata vṛkṣa-gaṇa eka
eka vṛkṣera tale eka eka rātri śayana vipra-grhe sthūla-bhikṣā kāhān mādhu-
karī śuṣka ruṭī-cānā cibāya bhoga parihari karoñwā-mātra hāte kāñthā chinṛā
bahir-vāsa kṛṣṇa-kathā kṛṣṇa-nāma nartana-ullāsa aṣṭa-prahara kṛṣṇa-bhajana
cāri daṇḍa śayane nāma-saṅkīrtane seha nahe kona dine kabhu bhakti-rasa-
śāstra karaye likhana caitanya-kathā śune kare caitanya-cintana*

“All of Mahaprabhu’s principal devotees treated Srila Rupa Goswami and

Sanatan Goswami with love and respect. If someone returned home to Bengal or Puri after a pilgrimage to Vrindavan, all the Lord's associates would inquire, 'Tell us how Rupa and Sanatan are doing in Vrindavan? What kind of austerities do they perform and what do they eat? How do they manage to engage in devotional service for a full twenty-four hours every day?'

"The devotee who had returned from Vrindavan would praise Sri Rupa and Sanatan Goswami in the following way: 'The two brothers have no fixed residence, but lie down each night beneath a different trees in the forest. They sometimes take a meal at a brahmin's house, or go from door to door merely taking a handful of cooked food from each home. This way, their meals consist of only dry bread and fried chick-peas that they eat without a spirit of enjoyment. Their only possessions are their water pots, quilts, and the torn loincloths that they wear. Even so, they constantly chant Krishna's holy names, discuss His pastimes and dance jubilantly. They engage in Krishna bhajan for almost twenty-four hours a day, sleeping only an hour and a half, and some days when they are absorbed in chanting the Holy Names they do not rest at all. They either write books on the divine raptures of devotional service or spend their time talking or thinking about Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.' " (Chaitanya Charitamrita, 2.19.123-131)

The devotees felt great joy at hearing about Rupa and Sanatan's expertise in bhajan. In fact, such amazing depths of devotion and renunciation are not surprising in those who have received the blessings of Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Rupa Goswami said as much in his invocatory verses of Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu:

hrdi yasya preranatayā pravartito 'ham varāka-rūpo 'pi tasya hareḥ pada-kamalam vande caitanya-devasya

"I worship the lotus feet of Lord Hari in His form as Chaitanya Deva, for through the inspiration He has given my heart, I have undertaken the work of writing this book, even though I am a most miserable wretch." (BRS 1.1.2)

The closeness of Sri Rupa to Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is the reason that the revered acharyas of our line have shown such dedication to his leadership. Krishna Das Kaviraja concludes every single chapter of the Chaitanya Charitamrita with the same words of reverence for Rupa and his foremost disciple, Raghunath Das.

śrī-rūpa-raghunātha-pade jāra āśa caitanya-caritāmṛta kahe kṛṣṇa-dāsa

"Krishna Das, who prays to rejoin the lotus feet of Sri Rupa and Raghunath,

recounts the nectarean biography of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.”

Our beloved spiritual master taught us to show our respects to our parātparaguru with the following prayer:

*namo bhaktivinodāya saccidānanda-nāmine
gaura-śakti-svarūpāya rūpānuga-varāya te*

“I offer my obeisance to Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur, who possesses a form of eternity, knowledge and bliss. He is the manifestation of Gauranga’s potency and is the best of the followers of Srila Rupa Goswami.”

Indeed, during his aprakaṭa-līlā our most merciful Prabhupada made special mention of taking Sri Rupa and Raghunath as our lead (anugatya). In his last instructions given on December 23, 1936, he told: “All of you please preach the message of Rupa and Raghunath with great enthusiasm. The ultimate object of our desires is to become specks of dust at the lotus feet of the followers of Rupa Goswami. Remain united in following the āśraya-vigraha in order to satisfy the transcendental senses of the one, nondual Supreme Truth. Make your way through this impermanent, transitory life in whatever way you can, keeping the goal of worshiping the Lord foremost in your minds. Don’t abandon this goal, even in the face of hundreds of dangers, insults, or persecutions. Don’t lose your spirit if you see that the majority of people cannot accept the principle of selfless service to the Supreme Lord. Never abandon your bhajan, hearing and chanting Krishna-katha, the sum and substance of your devotional life. Please always chant the name of the Lord, being humbler than a blade of grass and more tolerant than the tree.

“This body is like an aging cow, which in ancient times was meant to be offered up in sacrifice. Only we desire to offer the body to Krishna in the sacrifice of the Holy Name established by Sri Krishna Chaitanya and His associates. We do not seek to become heroes performing great works or religious deeds; our true being and our identity is to be the dust at the lotus feet of Sri Rupa Prabhu in life after life. The stream that flows from Bhaktivinoda Thakur will never be dammed up. Remember this and vow to double your efforts to fulfill Bhaktivinoda Thakur’s desires. Amongst you are many capable and worthy individuals. We seek nothing for ourselves; our only motto is:

*ādadānas ṭṛṇam dantair idaṁ yāce punaḥ punaḥ
śrīmad-rūpa-padāmbhojadhūliḥ syāṁ janma-janmani*

“Taking grass between my teeth, I pray repeatedly that I may become a speck of dust at Sri Rupa Goswami’s lotus feet, birth after birth.” (Raghunath Das’s

Muktā-caritra)

“While living in the world, we encounter many difficulties; but there is no need for us to be bewildered by these difficulties—nor need we make any effort to remove them. What is necessary for us, while we are still here, is to learn what will remain after—what will be the nature of our eternal life. Though there may be many things that we do or don’t want, we must come to terms with this duality of attractions and aversions. They will draw us in to the extent that we distance ourselves from Krishna’s lotus feet. We can only begin to comprehend the exquisite taste of service to Krishna’s lotus feet after we transcend worldly attractions and repulsions and are attached to His holy name. “The doctrines of Krishna bhakti may at first seem startling, perhaps even perplexing. But every human being is knowingly or unknowingly struggling to eliminate the adventitious elements in life that interfere with the direct experience of eternal fulfillment. Our only obligation is to go beyond duality and to enter that world of eternal fulfillment.

“We have no attachment or hostility for anyone in this world. Any arrangements we make here in this world last but a moment. On the other hand, the need to search out the supreme fulfillment is equally unavoidable for everyone. May all of you work united and in harmony toward the same goal; earn the right to serve the root āśraya-vigraha. May the current of ideas propagated by Rupa Goswami flow throughout the world. May we never under any circumstances become indifferent to the seven-tongued sacrificial flame of the Holy Name. If our attraction to it remains ever increasing, we will achieve all perfection. Remain faithful to Rupa Goswami’s followers and preach Rupa and Raghunath’s teachings enthusiastically and fearlessly.”

Since Srila Prabhupada indicated that Bhaktivinoda Thakur is the manifestation of Mahaprabhu Sri Gauranga’s potency and the best of Rupa Goswami’s followers, it is evident that the “stream that flows from Bhaktivinoda Thakur” is the same as that which flowed from Rupa Goswami. Rupa established the heartfelt desire of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu on this earth; therefore, the heartfelt desire of Bhaktivinoda Thakur was to similarly establish Mahaprabhu’s objectives in this world and nothing more. What then was Mahaprabhu’s heartfelt desire? The answer is found in the Chaitanya Charitamrita: he wished to distribute or bestow the highest, most relishable form of devotional service in the mood of divine consorthood, something that he had never given before. Then Mahaprabhu went on to specify how one could become eligible for this gift. He wrapped his arms around the necks of Svarupa Damodar and Ramananda Raya and said, “The topmost means for attaining love for Krishna in this age of quarrel is the chanting of the Holy Name.” Mahaprabhu went on to tell us how to chant in order to experience the awakening of such prema:

trṇād api sunīcena taror iva sahiṣṇunā amāninā mānadena kīrtanīyah sadā hariḥ

“One should chant the holy name of the Lord while thinking himself to be lower than the grass. He should be more tolerant than the tree, take no respect for himself and give all respect to others.” (CC 3.20.21)

Without closely following the instruction of this verse, it is impossible to attain the wealth of Vraja prema that was so dear to the heart of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. For this reason, our beloved Srila Prabhupada taught that all perfections come through increasing attachment for the sacrifice of the Holy Name with its seven-flamed sacrificial fire. With this instruction in particular, he put us on our guard. We thus recognize our Srila Prabhupada to be the best of Sri Rupa and Svarupa Damodar’s successors, and so we prostrate ourselves before him on the ground with a cloth wrapped around our necks in humility and pray with these words:

nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-presthāya bhūtale

śrīmate bhakti-siddhāntasarasvatīti nāmine

“O Srila Prabhupada, you have descended to this earth from the transcendental abode of Goloka at the wish of Lord Krishna Himself and here you are known by the name Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati. I prostrate myself in obeisance to you, Sri Gurudeva, because you are most dear to Lord Krishna; indeed, you are His prakāśa-vigraha. O Master! Destroy all vestiges of material ego that pollute me and give me a place at your lotus feet, making me the servant of your servants.” (This is the meaning of the word namah.)

śrī-vārṣabhbāṇavī-devīdayitāya kṛpābdhaye

kṛṣṇa-sambandha-vijñānadāyine prabhave namah

“O Master, you bestow realized knowledge of our relation with Krishna, the son of the King of Vraja, Nanda. You are distressed upon seeing the suffering of others; you are the ocean of unlimited compassion. You are one of the most intimate associates of the daughter of the King Vrishabhanu, Srimati Radharani. For this reason, you identify yourself as Vārṣabhbāṇavī-dayita-dāsa, the servant of Radha’s beloved Krishna. I repeatedly pay my prostrated obeisance at your feet.”

mādhuryojjvala-premādhyaśrī-rūpānuga-bhakti-da

śrī-gaura-karuṇā-śaktivigrahāya namo’stu te

“Just as the Supreme Lord has majestic and intimate aspects to His nature, there

are majestic and intimate moods of devotion. The most intimate type of devotion is the conjugal love displayed by the gopis in Vraja. Rupanuga bhakti is precisely this erotic mood of devotion, full of the sweetness and brightness of divine love. I pay my obeisance unto you for you bestow this love on all, being the embodiment of Mahaprabhu Sri Gauranga's compassionate energy."

In this verse, there is a single, lengthy compound:

*mādhuryojjvala-premāḍhyaśrī-rūpānu-bhakti-dada
śrī-gaura-karuṇā-śakti-vigrahāya.*

The word *mādhuryojjvala* means that the reverential *svakīyā* mood of devotion found in the Queens of Dvaraka like Satyabhama is completely absent from the devotion of the Rupanugas (followers of Sri Rupa).

The gopis' love in the *parakīyā* spirit is the essence of *mādhuryojjvala-prema*. The gopis sang to Krishna in the Bhagavatam (10.31.16):

pati-sutānvaya-bhrātṛ-bāndhavān ativilāṅghya te'nty acyutāgatāḥ

"We have come to You, disregarding our parents, children, brothers and relatives."

These words are filled with the exalted, brilliant nature of their devotion as described by Svarupa Damodar: *unnatojjvala-rasāṁ sva-bhakti-śriyam*. The second half of the compound, *śrī-gaura-karuṇā-śakti-vigrahāya*, is an explanation of the words *sad-anugraho bhavān* spoken by the demigods to Krishna (SB 10.2.31), meaning that devotees are embodiments of the Lord's compassion. Therefore, it is said that the Lord's mercy follows on that of His devotees (*bhakta-kṛpānugāminī bhagavat-kṛpā*).

*namaste gaura-vāṇīśrī-mūrtaye dīna-tāriṇe
rūpānuga-viruddhāpasiddhānta-dhvānta-hāriṇe*

"O lord, you are the embodiment of Mahaprabhu's divine gospel! O Master! You take away the sufferings of the fallen souls and destroy the darkness of misconceptions that go against the teachings given by Rupa Goswami and his followers. I pay my obeisance to your feet again and again."

Our revered godbrother Bhakti Rakshaka Sridhar Maharaj explained that the words *gaura-vāṇī-śrī-mūrtaye* mean that Srila Prabhupada is the embodiment of Harinam sankirtan. Our most worshipable Srila Prabhupada appeared at 3:30 P.M. on Friday, February 6, 1874 (1280 Bengali, 1795 Śaka), or *kṛṣṇā pañcamī* tithi of the month of Magh, in the home of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur in the holy

place where Sri Chaitanya Himself had relished the mood of love in separation from Krishna. Bhaktivinoda Thakur's house, named Narayan Chata, was situated not far from the Jagannath temple on the Grand Road in Puri and was constantly reverberating with the sound of Harinam. Those who saw the effulgent newborn child in the arms of his mother Bhagavati Devi were all astounded that the umbilical cord was wrapped around his shoulder like a natural brahmin thread. Just as Lord Krishna's birth and activities are extraordinary and superhuman, so too were the birth and activities of His dearest devotee, Srila Prabhupada, His prakāśa-vigraha or manifest representative.

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur named the child after Jagannath Deva's parā śakti, Bimala, calling him Bimala Prasad (Vimalā-prasāda). Six months after Prabhupada's appearance, it was time for the Rathayatra festival. That year, by Jagannath's completely independent desire, the cart stopped directly in front of Bhaktivinoda Thakur's house on the main road and simply would not move forward. Jagannath remained motionless in front of Narayan Chata for three whole days. Under Bhaktivinoda Thakur's direction, a kirtan festival was held in front of the Deity for the entire three-day period. Indeed, Srila Prabhupada went through his entire childhood in the midst of an extended festival of Harinam sankirtan. During one of those three days, his mother brought the six-month-old child to pay obeisances to Lord Jagannath. While there, he stretched out his hands and took the garland from around the Deity's neck. At the same time, Bhaktivinoda gave the six-month-old child Jagannath prasad for the anna-prāśana ritual, in which a child eats its first solid food. Srila Prabhupada stayed in Purushottama Dham for ten months after his birth. After this he travelled to Ranaghat in Bengal in a palanquin with his mother. While Bhaktivinoda Thakur was stationed in Serampore (Śrirāmapura), Srila Prabhupada invented a type of phonetic writing that he called Bicanto, or vikṛnti. He was only in the fifth grade at the time. One day two years later, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur returned from a visit to Puri with a japa mala made of tulasi. He gave it to Srila Prabhupada, now in the seventh grade, and initiated him in the chanting of the Holy Name and the Nrisingha mantra. During this period, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur was writing Chaitanya-śikṣāmṛta and he would read each chapter to Srila Prabhupada as he completed it. In 1881, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur started construction of Bhakti Bhavan in Calcutta's Ram Bagan district. While digging the foundations for the building, a small deity of Kurma was found. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur taught his seven-year-old son the rules for deity worship and the Kurma mantra, after which Srila Prabhupada started to regularly wear tilak and perform the deity's puja. At a very early age, Srila Prabhupada showed an interest in learning, with a particular talent for astrology. Recognizing that his status would be as a guru amongst gurus and a great devotee, mahābhāgavata, his teachers gave him the title Siddhānta-sarasvatī.

In the year 1918 at Vraja-pattana, Sri Mayapur, Srila Prabhupada took tridaṇḍi-sannyāsa and thenceforth would bare the name Parivrājakācārya Tridaṇḍi-svāmī Srimad Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati.¹ At other times, he occasionally identified himself as Varshabhanavi Dayita Das. In 1892, Srila Prabhupada was admitted to the Calcutta Sanskrit College. It did not take him long to go through all the books in the curriculum. He spent most of his time systematically reading all the important books in the college library. In 1898, Srila Prabhupada set off on a pilgrimage with Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur during which they visited Kashi, Prayag, and on the return trip, Gaya. While in Kashi, he met Ram Mishra Shastri, with whom he discussed many aspects of the Ramanuja sampradaya. At about this time, he first began to show the spirit of intense renunciation that ran throughout his lifetime. Starting in 1897, he began following the rules of Chaturmasya according to the Vaishnava scriptures, himself cooking haviṣyānna, which he would eat directly off the ground without using a plate, and sleeping on the ground without a pillow. In 1897, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur established his bhajana-kuñja, his abode of worship, in Nabadwip's Godrumadvipa area near the Saraswati River, calling it Svānanda-sukhada Kuñja.

It was there that Srila Prabhupada first saw his future guru, Srila Gaura Kishor Das Goswami Maharaj, in 1898. He was attracted by the extraordinary character of this Vaishnava paramahamsa who was indifferent to all social conventions. Later, on the order of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur, he took bhāgavatī dīkṣā from him in the month of Magh in 1900. Just prior to this, Srila Prabhupada accompanied Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur on a trip to Balesor and Remuna, where he had darshan of Kshirachora Gopinath. They then traveled on to Bhubaneswar and Puri. He stayed there for some time, engaging in bhajan according to Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur's instructions until the Thakur advised him to go to Mayapur. Once there, he engaged in intense solitary bhajan with great austerities. While in Puri, Srila Prabhupada was introduced to the abbot of the Govardhana Math, Madhusudan Tirtha, with whom he had many philosophical discussions. Tirtha Swami held Srila Prabhupada in high esteem. Other people he met in Puri and with whom he engaged in scriptural discussions included Vasudeva Ramanuja Das and Damodar Ramanuja Das of Samadhi Math; Raghunandan Ramanuja Das of Emar Math, Jagannath Das of the Jamayet sampradaya's Papudiya Math, an old ascetic nicknamed Omkara Japi ("one who chants Om") of the Swargadwar Chata, the scholar Sadashiva Mishra, the lawyer Harishchandra Basu, Bihari Das Pujari of the Ganga Mata Math, Radhakanta Math's abbot Narottama Das, Anantacharan Mahanti, and others. Srila Prabhupada had begun studying the Ramanuja sampradaya earlier, when in Bengal, and had even published books and articles as the results of his research. In 1898, he wrote about Srinath Muni, Yamunacharya and other acharyas of this school in a series of articles that appeared in Sajjana-toṣaṇī. Before this, he had been provided books in the four South Indian languages by Sundaresvara Srauti,

from which he learned about both the Ramanuja and Madhva schools. In January of 1904, Srila Prabhupada visited Sita Kund and Chandranath.

In December of the same year he went to Puri and on February 23, 1905, he went on a pilgrimage to South India. He visited Singhachalam, Rajahmundry, Madras, Perembadur, Tirupati, Conjeevaram, Kumbhakonam, Srirangam, Madurai and other places before returning to Calcutta and Sri Mayapur. In Perembadur, he learned the scriptural rules and regulations surrounding Vaishnava tridaṇḍi-sannyāsa from a member of that order in the Ramanuja sampradaya. Here we would like to say a few words about Bhaktivinoda Thakur's discovery of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's birthplace. In his autobiography, the Thakur wrote the following words: "I had been carefully studying the devotional scriptures, and as a result of associating with a group of devotees, I found that I was becoming quite disinterested in material life. I thought that I would find myself a place on the banks of the Yamuna in Vrindavan so that I could engage in solitary bhajan. I was writing Āmnāya-sūtra at that time . . . One day I had to go to Tarakeshwara on business. That night, Tarakeshwara Shiva appeared to me in a dream and said, 'You are going to Vrindavan. But in Nabadwip, right near your own home, there is much work still to be done. What have you done about that?' "

In mid-November of 1887, the Thakur was transferred to Krishnagar where he continued his intense study of the Vaishnava scriptures. At around Christmas time, he was visiting Kuliya, the modern city of Nabadwip, in search of the sites of Mahaprabhu's pastimes. He wrote the following account of events that took place in his autobiography: "I had come to Nabadwip to find the places where Mahaprabhu had performed His lilas, but was disappointed at my lack of success. The people of the town seemed to know nothing about any such places. One day, Kamal, a clerk, and I were standing on the roof looking around. At about ten o'clock at night, the sky became very dark and overcast, but I saw a brightly illuminated building on the north side of the Ganges. I asked Kamal whether he also saw it and was amazed when he said he did. In the morning I went back to the roof of the Queen's House and looked carefully in the direction where I had seen the light. I could see that there was a Tal tree standing there. I made inquiries from other people and they told me that the place was called Ballal Dighi where the ruins of King Ballal Sen's fortress could be found.

"The next Monday, I had to go to Krishnagar, but on Friday I went to Ballal Dighi. There again I had a similar vision and the next morning I set out for the place from which I had seen the light coming. When I arrived there, I asked some of the older residents about the site. They told me that it was the birthplace of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. "From then on, I began reading books like Narahari Thakur's Parikramāpaddhati and Bhakti-ratnākara and Vrindavan Das's

Chaitanya Bhagavata. One by one, I visited each of the villages and neighborhoods mentioned in these books. I wrote *Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya* in Krishnagar and sent it to Calcutta for publication. I recounted everything I learned to Dvaraka Babu, an engineer, and he was sufficiently intelligent to grasp the problem. He made a map of the Nabadwip area for me and it was published in a later edition of *Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya*."

In 1893 (Sunday, Magh 3, 1299 Bengali), a public meeting was held in the courtyard of the A.V. School in Krishnagar. After many convincing proofs such as old land deeds and maps were shown, everyone unanimously agreed that the site at Ballal Dighi was indeed Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's birthplace and that they should work to publicize this. The Nabadwip Publicity Committee (*Navadvīpa Pracāriṇī Sabhā*) was established to this end. The respected scholar Ajitanath Nyayaratna and many other reputable people from Krishnagar became members of this committee. The minutes of the inaugural meeting of the Sabha can be found in the fifth volume of *Sajjana-toṣaṇī*, number 11, pages 201-207.

Mahaprabhu's appearance day in Bengali year 1300 (1894) was marked by a lunar eclipse. A great kirtan festival took place during which deities of Gaura and Vishnupriya were installed at the birth site. In 1920, Srila Prabhupada revived the 16-kros parikrama of Nabadwip Dham, according to the desires of Bhaktivinoda Thakur. The following year, the parikrama was expanded into a nine-day festival. While staying in Mayapur in 1905, Srila Prabhupada began preaching the message of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and, following in the footsteps of Hari Das Thakur, undertook a vow of chanting a billion (ten crores) Holy Names, chanting a minimum of three lakhs (300,000) every single day. We have heard that the japa beads that Prabhupada used to fulfill this vow were the same ones that Thakur Bhaktivinoda gave him in Serampore when he was just seven years old. Using these very same beads, Prabhupada set the example of unfailingly chanting at least one lakh of Names every single day until he became invisible to this world. In 1906, Rohini Kumar Ghosh, the nephew of Justice Chandra Madhab Ghosh, had an extraordinary dream telling him to go to Srila Prabhupada and take initiation from him. He thus became Saraswati Thakur's first disciple. In February 1909, Srila Prabhupada had a cottage built on the site of Chandrasekhara Acharya's house where he continued to engage in his vrata. He envisioned the large tank next to the cottage as non-different from Radha Kund.

In 1911, when Bhaktivinoda Thakur was displaying his pastime of being bedridden in Svānanda-sukhada Kuñja in Godrumadvipa, an assembly of hundreds of scholars and pandits was called in Midnapore at the village of Balighai. Many materialistic brahmins were insisting that non-brahmin Vaishnavas were ineligible to initiate brahmins and that initiated non-brahmins could not worship the Salagram Sila form of Vishnu. The meeting was called to

debate this issue. Members of the Goswami families who were the acting acharyas in the Vaishnava world took the side of the Smartas in this matter. Presiding over the meeting was Visvambharananda Deva Goswami, the great Vaishnava scholar from Gopiballabhpur. Srila Prabhupada was invited to speak by the Vrindavan scholar, Madhusudana Goswami, and went there with the blessings of Bhaktivinoda Thakur. Establishing the position he had been taught by Bhaktivinoda, Srila Prabhupada read an article entitled “Brahmins and Vaishnavas” and gave a discourse in which he completely destroyed the arguments of the materialistic karmi Smartas and established the proper conclusion of the scriptures. This article was subsequently published by the Gaudiya Printing Works as Brāhmaṇa o Vaiṣṇava tāratamya-viśayaka siddhānta (“Establishing the correct understanding of the relative positions of brahmins and Vaishnavas”). In the same year, another debate was held at Boro Akhra in Nabadwip town. This time, Srila Prabhupada established the eternity of the Gaura mantra on the basis of the Atharva-veda’s Caitanyupaniṣad and other scriptural evidences. In the first week of November, 1912, Srila Prabhupada took a small group of devotees on a tour of Sri Khanda, Jajigram, Katwa, Jhamatpur, Akai Hat, Chakhandi, Dai Hat and other places where Mahaprabhu’s associates had had their homes. In every place he visited, he preached the teachings of pure devotional service.

In April of 1913, He established a publishing house named Bhāgavatayantrālaya in Calcutta’s Kalighat area. The first book printed was Chaitanya Charitamrita with his Anubhāṣya commentary. Others which followed were the Bhagavad Gita with Visvanath Chakravarti Thakur’s Sārārtha-varṣīṇī commentary and the mahā-kāvya Gaurakṛṣṇodaya of the Orissan poet, Govinda Das. Prabhupada used to call the printing press the “Big Drum” (bṛhat mṛḍaṅga). He was very enthusiastic about preaching through such publications because he saw it as a more stable and far-reaching method of spreading Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu’s pure devotional teachings. He made sure that he was always kept aware of everything that went on in the press.

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur entered the eternal pastimes on June 23, 1914. Then in January of 1915, the press was moved to Vraja-pattana in Mayapur where more books continued to be printed. The Anubhāṣya commentary to the Chaitanya Charitamrita was completed at Vraja-pattana on June 14, 1915.

Srila Prabhupada took over the editorship of Sajjana-toṣaṇī, the monthly magazine founded by Bhaktivinoda Thakur. The printing press was again moved to Krishnagar in July of 1915, and Sajjana-toṣaṇī and various books written by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur continued to be published from there. At daybreak on Utthāna Ekādaśī, November 17, 1915, our parama gurudeva, Srila Gaura Kishor Das Goswami Maharaj, entered into his eternal pastimes from Koladvipa.

As Babaji Maharaj's only initiated disciple, Srila Prabhupada performed his last rites according to the prescriptions of Gopal Bhatta Goswami's *Saṁskāra-dīpikā*, establishing the samadhi of his guru in the Nutan Chora neighborhood of old Kuliya (the present-day town of Nabadwip). Some years later, when Babaji Maharaj's samadhi tomb was about to fall into the Ganges, Srila Prabhupada sent disciples to transfer his transcendental remains to the Chaitanya Math in their entirety. This was done on August 21, 1932.

Prabhupada was personally present when the new samadhi temple was inaugurated next to his bhajan kutir on the banks of Sri Radha Kund in Sri Dham Mayapur and he initiated the regular service there. Srila Prabhupada was overwhelmed by feelings of separation after the *aprakaṭa-līlās* (disappearance pastimes) of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur and Paramahamsa Babaji Maharaj in successive years, so much so that he was intent on giving up his own body. One night, towards dawn, he had a dream in which he saw all the members of the Pancha Tattva approaching the Yoga Pith temple from the east. They were being followed by Jagannath Das Babaji, Bhaktivinoda Thakur and Gaura Kishor Das Babaji, who all encouraged him profusely. They said, "Saraswati! Don't lose hope. Begin your task of establishing pure religion. Preach Gaura's message and spread the service of His holy name, abode and mission everywhere. We are eternally present with you and always ready to help you. Countless people and unlimited wealth are waiting to help you in this mission." When Prabhupada had received these blessings from Mahaprabhu and His eternal associates, he renewed his commitment to preaching activity: he began publishing even more books and spiritual magazines, traveling and establishing mathas and temples throughout India, consecrating deities for worship in these temples, and sending preachers from the Indian Ocean to the Himalayas and beyond to spread Mahaprabhu's message. His eternal companions began to come forth with their individual capacities to take shelter of his lotus feet and to help him in his preaching mission. On March 7, 1918, on the auspicious occasion of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's appearance day, Srila Prabhupada took *tridaṇḍī-sannyāsa* in Sri Mayapur.

On that same day, he consecrated the deities of Sri Sri Guru-Gauranga and Sri Sri Gandharvika-Giridhari at the house of Chandrasekhara Acharya and established Sri Chaitanya Math. Five years later, work began on the construction of a 29-spire temple at Chaitanya Math. The temple was conceived in such a way that images of the founders of the four sampradayas, namely Sripad Ramanuja of the Sri sampradaya, Purnaprajna Madhva of the Brahma sampradaya, Sripad Vishnuswami of the Rudra sampradaya, and Nimbarka of the Sanaka sampradaya, were installed in shrines in each of its four corners. Though the four acharyas of the theistic teachings of the Vedanta (*viśiṭādvaita*, *śuddha-dvaita*, *śuddhādvaita*, and *dvaitādvaita-siddhānta*, respectively) each had

his place, the main temple was reserved for Sriman Mahaprabhu, the teacher of the essence of Vedanta, acintya-bhedābheda-siddhānta—the ultimate theistic doctrine as taught in the Srimad Bhagavatam. The main deity room also housed the deities of Sri Sri Radha-Govinda and Srila Prabhupada's Giridhari deity, Vinodaprana. Srila Prabhupada made the Chaitanya Math the headquarters from which he ran his worldwide mission.

In November of the same year, 1918, he established a center in Calcutta at 1 Ultadingi Junction Road, which was named Sri Bhaktivinoda Asan. From there, he traveled to various towns in Jessore and Khulna districts. On February 5, 1919, Srila Prabhupada reestablished the World Vaishnava Association (Visva Vaishnava Raja Sabha) at Bhaktivinoda Asan. On June 27, 1919, he consecrated a deity of Bhaktivinoda at Svananda-sukhada Kunja in Godrumadvipa. The first month-long sankirtan festival was held at Bhaktivinoda Asan from August 18 to September 18, 1919. On June 23, 1920, exactly six years after the disappearance of Bhaktivinoda Thakur, Srila Prabhupada's worshipable mother followed him and entered the eternal abode.

On November 1, 1920, Srila Prabhupada initiated Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur's disciple Srila Jagadish Bhakti-pradīpa, Vaiṣṇava-siddhānta-bhūṣaṇa, Sampradāya-vaibhavācārya, B.A., into the renounced order of tridaṇḍisannyāsa. He was thus the first member of the order in the Visva Vaishnava Raja Sabha and was known thenceforth as Tridandi Swami Bhakti Pradip Tirtha.

On March 14, 1921, Srila Prabhupada reestablished the annual parikrama or tour of Nabadwip Dham. On August 19, 1922, the monthly magazine and heartbeat of the Gaudiya Math, the Gauḍīya, was published for the first time from the Bhagavata Press. It is clear that Srila Prabhupada began his preaching work of spreading Mahaprabhu's message throughout the world after taking the tridaṇḍī-sannyāsa order in 1918. He himself vigorously gave learned lectures and speeches and arranged for books and periodicals in Bengali, English, Hindi, Sanskrit and Oriya to be published in great numbers. Temples and deity worship were established in many places both within and without India.

Srila Prabhupada ended his sojourn amongst the mortals of this world on Thursday 1, 1937, at 5:30 in the morning, joining the service of Their Lordships Radha and Govinda in Their early morning pastimes.

[First published in 1990, Chaitanya Vāṇī 30.2-3]

He Built Temples of the Holy Name

The kind of blessing that gives rise (udaya) to evil (manda) is called mandodayā dayā; it cannot be considered a genuine blessing. Svarupa Damodar Goswami, on the other hand, described Mahaprabhu's mercy as amandodayā.

heloddhūlita-khedayā viśadayā pronmīlad-āmodayā śamyac-chāstra-vivādayā rasadayā cittārpitonmādayā śāsvad-bhakti-vinodayā śamadayā mādhurya-maryādayā śrī-caitanya dayānidhe tava dayā bhūyād amandodayā

“O Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu! O ocean of mercy! Let there be an awakening of Your auspicious mercy, which gives rise to all good fortune: It easily destroys all lamentation; it is pure and awakens transcendental bliss; it quiets all disagreements in the different scriptures; it intoxicates the soul with a taste of the transcendental mellows; it stimulates the joys of eternal devotional service, causing the recipient to lose external consciousness; it brings peace from all sensual desires, and demonstrates both the paths of spontaneous devotion and that of respect for the rules and regulations.” (CC 2.10.119)

Our most revered Srila Prabhupada gave the following extended commentary on this verse in his *Anubhāṣya*: “Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the most magnanimous Personality of Godhead, the personification of divine love, distributes His mercy in three ways to the pious souls. Every living entity is morose in the material world because he is always in want; he thus seeks to rid himself of his miseries through a multitude of means, but is never successful in this endeavor. The favor of the Lord is never attainable by one’s own efforts. However, when the fragrance of the lotus feet of the Lord expands in the living being’s heart by the grace of the Lord, the distresses in the mind are cleansed just as dust is wiped from a mirror. At such a time, the heart is illuminated by the joy of the Lord’s loving service. “When one reads the various different scriptures, one often becomes confused by the conflicting arguments presented therein. As soon as one receives the mercy of the Lord, however, the heart becomes intoxicated with the wine of Krishna and this intoxication arising out of the Lord’s mercy puts to rest all the confusion arising out of the dissenting views of various sectarian scriptures. An appreciation of the sweetness of devotion engages the conditioned soul in constant service to the Lord’s lotus feet. At that point, the fortunate living entity takes pleasure in nothing but the divine love of Krishna. Krishna’s mercy is thus spotless (nirmalā); it carries the taste of spiritual life (rasadā) and is filled with intoxicating jubilation (sa-madā).

“Thus, by the mercy of Lord Krishna the heart of the devotee is purified of the anguish born of material wants, which is a contamination. By the grace of the

Lord, one gets a taste of spiritual life and transcends scriptural arguments, becoming firmly convinced of the Vaishnava philosophy. Not long thereafter, the mind becomes fully intoxicated with prema. As Krishna's mercy continues to descend, total indifference to sense enjoyment develops and, consumed by Krishna's sweetness, the jiva takes pleasure in devotion alone. "So to resume: in the beginning, a conditioned soul is bereft of God consciousness and always morose from sense objects. In the next stage, the living being seeks out the Supreme Lord. Finally, he becomes devoted to the Lord's service. The first stage of the Lord's mercy results in the devotee's misconceptions being vanquished and his heart being cleansed of all material dirt. It is only then that one begins to take pleasure in Krishna. In the next stage of the Lord's mercy, one understands the truth of the devotional philosophy (*bhakti-siddhānta*).

This means that he gets a taste for the Lord's service with the result that he becomes intoxicated with divine love. When the devotee attains the highest stage of divine sweetness by the mercy of the Lord, he or she becomes so attached to the His devotional service and begins to see the Lord's activities everywhere and at all times. By Krishna's mercy, the jiva's thirst for sense pleasures is extinguished; in other words, he is liberated. But this means that he has no interest for anything other than the activities of devotional service, of which the primary is chanting the names and glories of the Lord. This is the final stage of devotion. "Even though a devotee may have had a desire for liberation, after taking this medicine for the material disease, he gives up any such desire and experiences the connection with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Though such a devotee may be materially absorbed, by the might of Krishna's mercy he can still put an end to his involvement in sense gratification and be fixed in pure devotion through the constant glorification of the Lord's virtues, which are so pleasing to the ear. Thus, everyone is advised to take exclusive shelter of the Lord's mercy." Mahaprabhu had no patience with statements that opposed Vaishnava orthodoxy (*bhakti-siddhānta-viruddha*) or were confused in their portrayal of divine sentiment (*rasābhāsa*). For this reason, Svarupa Damodar Goswami was called upon to inspect any books, songs or verses to ascertain whether they would bring the Lord pleasure or not. In these matters, Svarupa Damodar was considered to be the Lord's second self and perfectly knowledgeable in the transcendental mellites. Srila Prabhupada, as the perfect follower of Svarupa Damodar and Rupa

Goswami, was similarly the personification of the orthodox Vaishnava doctrine (*śuddha-bhakti-siddhānta-vāṇī*). He never compromised Mahaprabhu's teachings out of considerations for public opinion. Prabhupada would quote Chaitanya Charitamrita (3.3.23): *nirapekṣa nahile dharma nā jāya rakṣaṇa*—"No one can preserve their principles without being aloof from the opinions of the world." Those who try to preserve the principles of religion while simultaneously trying

to maintain popularity with the worldly will have to show their approval for so many conflicting doctrines that the purity of the true religion will be lost. Rather than serving that pure spiritual religion, they become servants of public opinion instead. Though they may receive applause from the people at large, they cannot do them any real good. The sad truth is that no one can please everybody. Instead of trying to do so, we should think that we can serve everyone by serving the Supreme Lord (*sarvārhaṇam acyutejyā*), just as by watering the root of a tree we can provide for its trunks and branches, or by feeding the stomach we can nourish the entire body. The principle is that by satisfying the Lord the entire universe is satisfied—*tasmīṁ tuṣṭe jagat tuṣṭam*. Therefore we should make our primary efforts for the pleasure of the Supreme Lord. Our most worshipable Srila Prabhupada, the best of the followers of Srila Rupa Goswami, would always quote the following verse from the *Bhakti-rasāmr̄ta-sindhu*:

anyābhilāṣitā-sūnyam jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam

ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānuśīlanam bhaktir uttamā

“The highest category of devotion or bhakti is defined as the culture of a favorable attitude to Krishna, devoid of all material desires and without any adulteration by monistic philosophy or fruitive action.” (BRS 1.1.11, CC 2.19.167)

In other words, to engage in pure devotion, we must give up all activities that go against the principles of service to the Lord, including illicit sexual activity or indeed any kind of unethical conduct. Such devotional service must be unblemished by desires for sense gratification or personal salvation and must be characterized by the direct effort to please the senses of the Lord. This verse is the guiding thread of bhakti theology; it shows that bhakti is independent of the paths of knowledge, works and yoga, all of which are permeated with selfish desire. Prabhupada followed this thread and dedicated himself to preaching this exclusive devotion by which all illusory fulfillments are eradicated. Krishna Das Kaviraja, who was also committed to the teachings of Rupa Goswami, quoted the above verse in his *Chaitanya Charitamrita*:

śuddha-bhakti haite haya premā utpanna ataeva śuddha-bhaktira kahiye lakṣaṇa

“Ecstatic love for Krishna arises out of the pure practice of devotion. Therefore, I shall describe the characteristics of pure devotion.”

anya-vāñchā anya-pūjā chāṛi jñāna karma ānukūlye sarvendriye kṛṣṇānuśīlana ei śuddha-bhakti ihā haite premā haya pañcarātre bhāgavate ei lakṣaṇa kaya

“To favorably culture Krishna consciousness with all of one’s senses, abandoning all other desires, the worship of other gods and efforts to attain the

supreme through the intellect or through works: this is the definition of pure devotional service from which ecstatic love is developed. The characteristics of such love are described in literatures like the Bhagavata and Pancharatra.” (CC 2.19.168-9)

Krishna Das then goes on to quote the Nārada-pañcarātra:

sarvopādhi-vinirmuktam tat-paratvena nirmalam

hrṣīkeṇa hrṣīkeśasevanam bhaktir ucyate

“The Pancharatra specifically defines devotional service as the engagement of the senses in the service of the Proprietor of the Senses. It adds that this service is to be free from any bodily or mental identification and unblemished through being exclusively fixed on the Lord.” (BRS 1.1.12; CC 2.19.170)

The Srimad Bhagavatam also discusses the characteristics of causeless devotional service in the following way:

ahaituky avyavahitā yā bhaktih puruṣottame sālokya-sārṣṭi-sāmīpyasārūpyaikatvam apy uta dīyamānam na gr̥hṇanti vinā mat-sevanam janāḥ sa eva bhakti-yogākhyā ātyantika udāhṛtaḥ

“Devotion to the Supreme Person is uninterrupted and unmotivated. Unless he is assured of having service to the Lord, a pure devotee does not accept any kind of liberation, whether it be residence on the same planet, equal opulence to the Lord, proximity to Him, having the same form as the Lord, or monistic union—even though the Lord may offer him them. Thus have I described the superlative stage of bhakti yoga.” (SB 3.29.11-13)

In his Durgama-saṅgamanī-ṭīkā, Srila Jiva Goswami comments on the word ahaitukī (“unmotivated”) in these verses by referring to the above-quoted verse from the Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu. He specifies that the unmotivated nature of bhakti is exemplified in the subsequent verse wherein a devotee is shown to desire none of the various types of liberation which are without service to the Lord. The “superlative stage” (ātyantikāḥ) of devotion means that this is the ultimate goal of human life. Srila Prabhupada often spoke of the inner identity of the two aspects of devotion known as the Bhagavata and the Pancharatra paths. The Pancharatra path refers specifically to the worship of deities, the construction of temples and other related activities that cannot be carried out uninterruptedly. This is not true of the Bhagavata path consisting of hearing, chanting and remembering the Lord’s names, forms and activities. However, Prabhupada showed how the two were harmonious on the transcendental plane.

He never promoted the building of temples and monasteries for the simple purpose of having opulent deity worship for beginners in devotional service, the *kaniṣṭha adhikārīs*.

Rather, he saw them as an institution for the worship of the Holy Name, in accordance with the various scriptural statements defining sankirtan as the uniting of many people in the chanting of the Lord's glories (*bahubhir militvā yat kīrtanam tad eva saṅkīrtanam*), for the congregational chanting of the Lord's names is the supreme religious activity of the age—*param vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam*—and has the power to clear the mind of all impurities, *ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam*. For Prabhupada, the first verse of Mahaprabhu's Śikṣāṣṭakam described the seven flames of the divine sacrifice of the Holy Name. He saw the value of constructing mathas and mandiras to the extent in which they facilitated the performance of this sacrifice, otherwise, a temple without the “deity” of the Holy Name was really empty and without any opulence whatsoever.

Prabhupada would say, “We didn't come into this world to become bricklayers or carpenters; we are simply peons carrying the message of Lord Chaitanya.” Thus, though Srila Prabhupada established monasteries, built temples, instituted the practice of deity worship and festivals, their underlying purpose was the preaching of Bhagavata Dharma. This was the way in which he harmonized the Pancharatra and Bhagavata paths of devotion. The first steps that Srila Prabhupada took to establish Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's mission was to open a printing press in Calcutta called the Bhagavata Press and begin publishing books on pure devotion. Up to that point he had not opened temples or established deity worship anywhere. He had learned from Bhaktivinoda Thakur to engage in the service of the śrauta-vānī, that is, the Divine Word or Logos emanating from the disciplic succession. Srila Prabhupada called the printing press the “big drum” (*br̥hat mṛdaṅga*). However, the sound of the clay mridanga only carries a short distance, whereas the reach of the printing press has no limit; thus, the worship of Krishna's sankirtan so dear to Mahaprabhu can be more perfectly carried out.

In 1885, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur established the Vaishnava Depository in his Calcutta home, Bhakti Bhavan, for the purpose of disseminating bhakti literature. Srila Prabhupada gained experience in printing and publishing in those days. He was engaged in proofreading and later writing articles for *Sajjana-toṣāṇī*, the monthly magazine edited by his father Bhaktivinoda Thakur. In the same year, the Thakur reinitiated the Visva Vaishnava Sabha (“World Vaishnava Association”) in South Calcutta. The eleven-year-old Bimala Prasad participated in the weekly meetings, carrying the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* from which Bhaktivinoda Thakur would lecture into the hall. He would then sit down and

listen to him attentively. Even at this age, the young Srila Prabhupada regularly read and recited Narottama Das Thakur's poems from Prārthanā and Prema-bhakti-candrikā. He also loved the king of all literature, the Srimad Bhagavatam. I also mentioned in a previous chapter that Bhaktivinoda Thakur brought Srila Prabhupada a rosary of tulasi beads when he was only seven years old, initiating him in the Maha Mantra and the Nrisingha mantra. His father would also read to him from his book, Chaitanya-śikṣāmṛta, while he was still writing it.

In 1881, when the foundation of Bhakti Bhavan was being dug, a Śālagrāma-silā of Kurma was found. Bhaktivinoda Thakur gave this deity to Srila Prabhupada to worship and from that time, he regularly observed Vaishnava practices such as wearing tilak and faithfully chanting the Kurma mantra. Bhaktivinoda Thakur gave the eight-year-old boy detailed instructions in how to worship the deity. In 1885, Srila Prabhupada accompanied his father on a tour of various places associated with Mahaprabhu's pastimes and companions, such as Kulinagram and Saptagram. Srila Prabhupada's life is thus a perfect example of Prahlad Maharaj's instruction in the Bhagavata for everyone to start practicing the Bhagavata Dharma in childhood.

*kaumāram ācaret prājño dharmān bhāgavatān iha
durlabham mānuṣam janmaa tad apy adhruvam arthatam*

“The perceptive individual will take up the practices of the Bhagavata religion from his very childhood. This human form of life is extremely rare, and though it can result in the ultimate good, such a destiny is uncertain.” (SB 7.6.1)

Prahlad was only a young boy when he spoke this verse. He did not approve the natural playfulness of the children who were in school with him, but rather than telling them to get involved in the varnashram system, he instructed them in hearing and chanting the glories of the Lord, in other words, the practices of the Bhagavata Dharma. Prahlad showed compassion to them in this way and we see that, like him, our most worshipable Srila Prabhupada also practiced and compassionately taught the Bhagavata religion from his own childhood. Among the twenty-four gurus the avadhūta brahmin Dattatreya described to Maharaj Yadu, one was his own material body. The teaching that he received from his body included the two following verses:

sṛṣṭvā purāṇi vividhāny ajayātma-śaktyā vṛkṣān sarīsrpa-paśūn khaga-dandaśūkān tais tair atuṣṭa-hṛdayaḥ puruṣāṁ vidhāya brahmāvaloka-dhiṣaṇām mudam āpa devaḥ

“With the help of His Maya potency, the Supreme Lord created this visible world with its trees, serpents, animals, birds and other creatures, but His heart remained

dissatisfied. Then He created man, who alone possesses the intelligence to see Brahman, and was delighted.” (SB 11.9.28)

*labdhvā sudurlabham idam bahu-sambhavānte mānusyam arthatam anityam
apiha dhīrah tūrṇam yateta na pated anumṛtyu yāvat nihśreyasāya viṣayaḥ
khalu sarvataḥ syāt*

“After many, many births, one is finally born in a most rare and valuable human body. Although it may be temporary, it provides an opportunity to attain the supreme goal. Therefore, the wise individual should immediately take up the effort to find that which provides the supreme good in all times and circumstances, and not give it up right to the moment of death.” (SB 11.9.29)

The most compassionate Srila Prabhupada often quoted this second verse to stress the rarity of human life and the necessity of engaging in the worship of the Lord without delay. In his comments on these verses, he wrote, “The conditioned soul is subject to repeated rebirths in which he may sometimes become a god, sometimes a human, or even an animal, a tree or some other immovable entity. These various external sheaths give the being differing identities according to which they engage in sense gratification and other activities appropriate to that species. The specificity of the human form of life, however, is that it allows one to learn about and experience the truth. It is thus an extremely important stop on the soul’s voyage from species to species, for elsewhere such experience and understanding of the truth about reality are beyond reach. “At the same time, the human body is not everlasting. The embodied soul that resides within that body has an extraordinary opportunity to achieve something of ultimate value. While in this body, he can consider what is the supreme good for himself. Before death strikes him down, it is imperative that he learn what that supreme good is. He must distance himself from all the apparent benefits related to the impermanent body and seek the joy that comes from his eternal duty of service to the supreme truth. This is most important for one who wishes to achieve that which is of eternal benefit to him.

Those who have use of their intelligence should think this matter over. “The human being’s use of time should be directed to the most important things, namely the service of the Supreme Lord. We can establish our ultimate good by following those who are committed to serving the Lord and do not waste their time in the trivial pursuit of flickering sense pleasures. The human being’s only duty is understanding what is his ultimate good; when assessing which of our duties are more or less important, we should place this priority at the top of the list. Bhakti, the true end of repeated births and deaths, arises through association with devotees. Without bhakti, the living being is so afflicted by the three kinds of material suffering that he either becomes a mayavadi out of the desire for

personal salvation or a fruitive worker out of a desire for sense gratification.”

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How He Worshiped the Holy Name

Our most worshipable Srila Prabhupada displayed an extraordinary attachment for the chanting of the Holy Name from his very childhood. He had such spontaneous enthusiasm both for chanting and deity worship that his father, mother and other relatives were astonished. He constantly read from the songbooks of Narottama Das Thakur. Srila Prabhupada started preaching Mahaprabhu’s gospel in 1905 after coming to Mayapur and settling there. You have also read previously that he followed Namacharya Hari Das Thakur’s example and began chanting three lakhs of Holy Names every day without fail with the object of chanting a hundred crores (one billion). During the time he was present on this earth, our most worshipable Srila Prabhupada wrote many letters to his disciples. In most of these, he gave instructions about the chanting of the Holy Names—Nāma-bhajana. A number of these letters were collected and published in three volumes as Śrīla Prabhupādera Patrāvalī. We have collected some of Prabhupada’s instructions on chanting from all these handwritten letters. Srila Prabhupada mercifully wrote, “The Holy Name alone is our life and soul.” Mahaprabhu stated that the nine principal types of devotional activities quickly give rise to prema, but among them, the chanting of the Holy Name is the most powerful. The proviso to avoid committing offenses to the Name is of course there. Prabhupada would often remind us that the Name quickly bears fruit if we chant humbly, being tolerant of the vicissitudes that face us in life, without desiring any honor for ourselves and always being prepared to honor all others. Our most merciful Srila Prabhupada wrote, “Any living being who does not worship Krishna inevitably becomes a mundane philosopher, a fruitive worker or a materialist. This is why we must always call out to the Lord by chanting the Maha Mantra. By loudly chanting a fixed number of Names every single day, the contaminations gradually diminish; the dullness of material consciousness flees. Even those who are inimical to the worship of the Lord will desist from mocking devotees who chant in this way. Offenseless chanting brings all perfections into the reach of the devotee. Materialistic people can do nothing to such a chanter.” (Vol. I, pp. 1-2)

“All auspiciousness comes from the regular chanting of a fixed number of Holy Names. It gives me great joy to know that you have understood this. Do not let up simply because various mundane thoughts disturb you while you are chanting the Holy Name. Such useless thoughts will gradually disappear as a result of chanting, so don’t become agitated on account of them. You cannot get the results of chanting prematurely. When you have a great deal of attraction for the Holy Name, the allure of mundane thoughts will diminish. If we do not have great enthusiasm for chanting, how will we ever get rid of such thoughts? ... If we serve the Holy Name with our bodies, minds and souls, then the Named will reveal His all-auspicious form to us.” (Vol. I, p. 3)

“I am overjoyed to hear that your enthusiasm for chanting is increasing. As our contaminations are removed by the chanting, the Lord’s form, qualities and pastimes will be revealed to us in the Holy Name. There is no point in making a separate effort to artificially remember the Lord’s form, qualities and pastimes. The Lord and His name are one and the same. This will be understood clearly when the coverings in our hearts are removed. By chanting without offenses you will personally realize that all perfections come from the Holy Name. Through chanting, the distinction that exists between the self and the gross and subtle bodies is gradually effaced and one realizes one’s own spiritual form. Once aware of the spiritual body, as one continues to chant, one sees the transcendental nature of the Lord’s form. Only the Holy Name reveals the spiritual form of the living being and then causes him to be attracted to Krishna’s form. Only the Holy Name reveals the spiritual qualities of the living being and then causes him to be attracted to Krishna’s qualities. Only the Holy Name reveals the spiritual activities of the living being and then causes him to be attracted to Krishna’s pastimes. By service to the Holy Name we do not only mean the chanting of the Holy Name; it also includes the other duties of the chanter. If we serve the Holy Name in body, mind and soul, then the direction of that service spontaneously manifests like the sun in the clear sky of the chanter’s heart. What is the nature of the Holy Name?

Eventually all these understandings spontaneously appear in the heart of one who chants the Holy Name. The true nature of Harinam is revealed through listening to, reading, and studying the scriptures. It is unnecessary to write anything further on this subject. All these things will be revealed to you through chanting.” (Vol. I, pp. 4-5)

“If you wish to give up offenses while chanting, then just go on chanting constantly and the offenses will stop. Sri man Mahaprabhu gave all His powers to Rupa Goswami. So pray to Sri Rupa and his followers and beg them to bestow Mahaprabhu’s mercy upon you. You should especially pray to the personified Name to make you worthy of serving Him. Through the Lord’s name, the Lord

of the Name (Nāma-prabhu) will take up residence in your heart.” (Vol. I, p. 6)

“The Lord does not accept any offering given by someone who does not chant a lakh of Holy Names every single day.” (Vol. I, p. 9)

“Continue to increase my eternal ecstasy by taking the Name offenselessly.” (Vol. I, p. 10)

“The service of Krishna, His devotees and the chanting of His holy names: though these three activities are distinct, they all have the same meaning. Through the congregational chanting of the Lord’s names, one renders service to Krishna and to His devotees. Similarly, by serving the Vaishnavas, we also render service to Krishna and to His name. And by serving Krishna, we also engage in chanting the Holy Names and serving the Vaishnavas. The evidence is in the verse sattvam viśuddham vasudeva-śabditam—‘The state of pure goodness is named vasudeva’ (SB 4.3.23).

When we read Chaitanya Charitamrita, we are engaging in service to Krishna and at the same time are engaged in chanting the Holy Name. The same result also comes of reading the Bhagavata in the association of devotees. Even in the performance of deity worship, the three most important activities are taking place, what to speak of when engaged in Nāma-bhajana.” (Vol. I, p. 19)

“Of all the means of avoiding the association of the unholy, the best is to increase the amount of japa that you are doing; so take care to do this. If you chant a lakh every single day, then offenders to the Holy Name will not be able to create a disruption in your spiritual life. Make sure that you set aside the time needed to chant a lakh of Names every day.” (Vol. I, p. 53)

“The Lord and His name are one and the same entity. For those who continue to make the distinction between the Lord and His name, it is absolutely necessary to associate with and serve those devotees who are expert in bhajan, for only in this way will the contaminations be removed from their hearts... When one becomes expert in bhajan, then it is his obligation to do good for others... Bhajan is not something that is done for show; it is not a public matter. If we chant the Holy Names loudly, then the temptation of sloth will not be able to swallow us up.” (Vol. I, pp. 61-62)

“Make an effort to increase the number of rounds you chant until you reach 64. If you subsequently decrease your number below that, you are considered ‘fallen’. So take care to chant without fail.” (Vol. I, p. 68)

“Remain in this place and chant the Holy Name in a regular fashion. Read the Chaitanya Bhagavata and the Chaitanya Charitamrita... Mahaprabhu is particularly merciful to those who are humble in mind and who consider themselves incapable... I pray to Mahaprabhu that your enthusiasm for serving the Lord should increase and that you become recognized in society. May He make you truly superior human beings and keep you fixed in bhajan... I will be happy when I learn that you are chanting the Holy Name without any disturbance, by the mercy of the Lord.” (Vol. II, pp. 1-2)

“The Lord and His name are one and the same entity. Chanting the Holy Name and having a direct vision of the Supreme Lord may appear to be two different things, but in actuality they are one. Liberated souls consider the Holy Name to be their object of worship. Study holy literatures like Chaitanya Bhagavata, Chaitanya Charitamrita, Narottama’s Prārthanā and Prema-bhakti-candrikā, and Bhaktivinoda’s Kalyāṇa-kalpa-taru. You should know that the true fruit of meditation and deity worship is the chanting of Krishna’s name.” (Vol. II, p. 3)

“Chant the Holy Names in seclusion, keeping a fixed number of rounds every single day, and avoiding offenses. If you chant the Holy Name with an awareness of the sambandhas, then no materialistic person can do you any evil. The living being who does not engage in Nāma-bhajana will find no other path to auspiciousness. The Holy Name is the Lord Himself. We cannot look upon the Lord’s name or the Lord Himself with mundane eyes; if we do, we naturally consider them to be distinct from each other. Those who are liberated have no doubts that the Name is the Lord Himself.” (Vol. II, p. 5)

“All auspiciousness comes to the living being as he chants. The Lord in the form of His name is not different from the Lord of the Name. Study the Chaitanya Charitamrita closely... Narottama Das Thakur has written, ‘I have died without worshiping Gaura. I have spent my life in striving for things without any value and made no effort to attain the truly valuable.’ Chant the Holy Name and pray in the way that Narottama did. No distress born of contact with the sense objects will be able to touch you.” (Vol. II, p. 7)

“Even if you have little taste for it, if you continue to chant the Holy Names with respect, then you will be able to learn that both Mahaprabhu and Krishna are not different from Their names. Before everything else, worship the spiritual master, then Gaura and then Krishna... Chant the Holy Names according to a fixed number. Gaura Hari and Radha-Krishna are the same entity; one should not make any distinction between Them. Gaura is Krishna. As you get to know Them, as you realize this, you will receive Their blessings... Nothing can compare with the mercy of Lord Gaurasundara. There is no limit to the sweetness of Lord Krishnachandra.” (Vol. II, p. 9)

“Do not be preoccupied with the end result of chanting. Rather, chant Krishna’s name constantly with patience and forbearance. The Lord will surely not sit silently and do nothing. Gaura Hari will certainly reward every practitioner according to the nature of his practice. Service to the Lord is called bhakti. You can also know that uttering the name of the Lord is devotion... As you run your hands over the japa mala, think that you are touching Lord Gaurasundara’s lotus feet. That is the way you should chant.” (Vol. II, p. 10)

“Read the Chaitanya Charitamrita with understanding and chant the Holy Name without offenses.” (Vol. II, p. 12)

“The living entities who render service to Hari, the guru and the Vaishnavas will be released from repeated birth and death; those who do not will be swallowed up by material life. Chant the Holy Name with faith constantly. Study the Upadeśāmṛta and Chaitanya Charitamrita and try to understand their deep inner meaning. The Lord is supremely merciful; one day or another, He will surely give you His blessings.” (Vol. II, p. 14)

“Chant the Holy Name without interruption. Read devotional literature offenselessly. May people feel pleased at seeing your exemplary life... We will not stop serving Krishna because [a certain devotee] has fallen into the hands of wicked people... I hope that you are able to pass the tests given you by the wicked and continue to chant the Names fearlessly. Even if you do not have firm faith, continue chanting constantly with great care.” (Vol. II, pp. 15-16)

“Pray to the Holy Name as you chant; then the Holy Name will bless you.” (Vol. II, p. 17)

“In mind, reject all bad association and chant the Holy Name without offense. Study the Chaitanya Charitamrita always.” (Vol. II, p. 18)

“If you chant the Holy Name without offenses, then you can be sure that all your entanglement in material sense gratification and fruitive activities from previous lives has all come to an end. One can only begin chanting as a result of initiation. You are a servant of God who is free from the results of past karma. So what is the need of superfluous material works after being initiated? Have you not chanted the Holy Name at least once? So why are you once again starting up fruitive rituals in order to destroy previously accumulated karma like a beginner in spiritual life? As long as a living being is bewildered, he will engage in such fruitive activities because he thinks he is in need; he wants to be rich so that he can engage in sense gratification, for that is what such activities lead to. The devotees of Krishna are liberated and their only duty is chanting the Holy Name.” (Vol. II, pp. 20-21)

“Serve the Holy Name with a special faith; then everything will be successful. Bless us that we may be able to chant the Name free from offenses.” (Vol. II, p. 24)

“Always be detached and chant the Holy Names without offenses. Always study holy literatures like Chaitanya Bhagavata, Chaitanya Charitamrita, Prārthanā and Prema-bhakti-candrikā, and Kalyāṇa-kalpa-taru. If you do so, all auspiciousness will come.” (Vol. II, p. 25)

“If you chant Krishna’s name, all bad association will disappear like the morning mist. Bad association means the mayavadis and fruitive workers, those who believe that they can achieve liberation through the power of intellect and those who have multifarious desires. It seems that with every passing day, more and more mayavadis are identifying themselves as Vaishnavas. It used to be thought that only the immoral and the foolish lower classes would claim to be Vaishnavas, but now it seems that every last mayavadi boasts of being one. If we follow the order of Svarupa Damodar Goswami, we will drive these mayavadis away and chant Harinam free from such bad association. Then Gaura Hari will give us His blessings.” (Vol. II, p. 27)

“Stay at home and chant always. That way, all auspiciousness will come to you.” (Vol. II, p. 28)

“All householders should faithfully serve the deity form of the Lord. Those householders who have a steady awareness of sambandha-jñāna and take exclusive shelter of the Holy Name must also show respect for others who are engaged in deity worship. Any householder who does not engage in deity worship in order to save money is a miser. Deity worship is particularly recommended for those householders whose discipline is weak and whose minds are distracted and disturbed.” (Vol. II, 32)

“We will engage in service to the Holy Dham of Mayapur by announcing the marketplace of the Holy Name, and not by chanting in seclusion. Do not disrupt the service of Mayapur by selfishly engaging in nirjana-bhajana.” (Vol. II, 51)

“Remember Bhaktivinoda Thakur’s words, ‘I cannot find the strength in myself alone’ (ekākī āmāya nāhi pāi bala) and work cooperatively to complete the sacrifice to the Holy Name in the way that I desire. Those who have responsibility for the performance of this sacrifice must cultivate the virtue of making friendship with everyone, that is, of winning the hearts and minds of all the Vaishnavas and engaging them in the service of the Lord.” (Vol. II, 53)

“By Lord Jagannath’s kindness, we are well. I have been given a great opportunity to chant constantly. Please come as quickly as possible to

Purushottam Math in Puri Dham and become free of the troubles of householder life.” (Vol. II, 64)

“I hope that you are finding joy in the worship of the Holy Name. Ordinarily, the rules of etiquette call on one to begin a letter, as other tasks, with words of glorification (jaya) or obeisance (namah) to the Lord. It is not correct to write the Maha Mantra, which is in the vocative case, at the head of a letter. If you do this, it then appears that you are proudly putting yourself in the position of the reader’s spiritual master or instructor. Nor do I approve of the Prakrita Sahajiyas’ habit of writing Rādhe Rādhe, thus giving respect to the Vaishnavas as though they were the Lord in His form as the supreme reservoir of devotion, nor of those who invent catchy new rhymes to replace the traditional mantras.” (Vol. II, 72)

“Where there is Hari-kathā (discussions of Lord Hari), such a place is holy—a tirtha. On the other hand, a place of pilgrimage where the Holy Names are not sung may be an amusing site to take a holiday, but is not useful in advancing in one’s service . . . In the penury of talk about Krishna, we come to think that material sense gratification is the most relishable thing, and so we desire it. Rupa Goswami wrote:

*syāt krṣṇa-nāma-caritādi-sitāpy avidyāpittopatapta-rasanasya na rocikā nu
kintv ādarād anudinam khalu saiva juṣṭo svādvī kramād bhavati tad-gada-mūla-
hantrī*

‘Krishna’s name and pastimes may well be sweet to the taste, but our tongues are filled with the bile of ignorance and so they do not seem desirable to us. If we diligently engage ourselves in serving them respectfully, day in and day out, then gradually they will become sweet to the taste, for they will cure the disease of ignorance at its foundations.’ (Upadeśāmṛta 7)

“We take pleasure in sense objects, but the most perfect objects of the senses are the Lord’s glorious lotus feet. We have forgotten this beauty and are ready to serve almost anything except Krishna. This search for objects other than Krishna is the root of our disease. As long as we have this disease, even the faintest contact with the Lord’s name, form, qualities, associates or pastimes provokes a negative reaction: we feel them to be bitter and unpleasant. But just as a jaundiced person is prescribed sugar candy to help cure him of his disease, the names and pastimes of the Lord are the cure for the disease of indifference to Him. Then the sweetness of Krishna’s name will manifest itself and will engage our spiritual senses in the service of the supreme object of divine love.

Please bless me that one day I may give up my attachment to the sense objects and dwell in Vrindavan—*viṣaya chāriyā āmi kabe jāba vṛndāvana?* “What

songs shall we sing? This one by Bhaktivinoda Thakur is particularly suitable:

*jīvana samāpta-kāle kariba bhajana ebe kari gr̄ha-sukha kakhanō e-kathā nāhi
bale vijñā-jana e-deha patanomukha āji vā śateka varṣe avaśya maraṇa
niścinta nā thāka bhāi jata śīghra pāro bhajo śrī-kṛṣṇa-carana jīvanera ṭhik nāi
saṁsāra nirvāha kari jāba āmi vṛndāvana ṛṇa-traya śodhibāre karitechi
sujatana e āśāya nāhi prayojana emana durāśā-vaśe jābe prāṇa avaśeṣe nā
haibe dīna-bandhu-carana-sevana jadi sumāngala cāo sadā kṛṣṇa-nāma gāo
gr̄he thāko vane thāko ithe tarka akāraṇa*

“A wise person never says, ‘I shall chant the Holy Names at the end of my life; at present, let me enjoy my life as a householder.’ He knows that the body is always on the brink of death. “Death will come, brother, whether today or in a hundred years, so do not be apathetic. Worship Krishna as soon as you can, for life is not a certainty. “There is no need to hope that you can go and live in Vrindavan while maintaining your household life and taking care to repay the three debts (to the saints, gods, and ancestors). If you keep trying to play both sides of the fence, then death will come and you will not have served the feet of the Lord, the friend of the destitute.

“If you want your ultimate good, then always sing the names of Krishna. It is not necessary to argue about whether you should remain in the home or renounce it.”
(Kalyāṇa-kalpa-taru, Sambandhābhidheya-prayojana, 4)

What else should we sing?

*cañcala jīvana srotah pravāhiyā kālera sāgare dhāya gela je divasa nā āsibe āra
ebe kṛṣṇa ki upāya tumi patita-janera bandhu jānihe tomāra nātha tumi to
karuṇājala-sindhu āmi bhāgya-hīna ati arvācīna nā jāni bhakati-leśa nija-guṇe
nātha kara ātmasāt ghucāiyā bhava-kleśa siddha-deha diyā vṛndāvana mājhe
sevāmṛta kara dāna piyāiyā prema matta kari more śuna nija-guṇa-gāna
yugala-sevāya śrī-rāsa-maṇḍale niyuktaa kara āmāya lalitā sakhiṇa ayogyā
kiñkari vinoda dhariche pāya*

“This flickering life is like a stream that flows into the ocean of time. Once a day has gone, it will never come back; so, Krishna, what should I do now? “You are the friend of the fallen; I recognize You as my Lord, for You are the ocean of compassion. “I am most unfortunate and lacking in wisdom. I haven’t got the slightest bit of devotion. O Lord, claim me as Your own out of the goodness of Your heart. Deliver me from the miseries of material life. “Give me my spiritual body in the midst of Vrindavan, bestowing the nectar of service upon me. Give me the nectar of love and intoxicate me. Listen to me as I sing Your glories.

“Engage me in the service of the Divine Couple in the Rasa mandala.

Bhaktivinoda, the most unworthy servant of Lalita Sakhi, holds tight to Your

lotus feet.” (Vol. II, 82-85)

“We beg everyone for their blessings that, in the spirit of Gaurasundara’s teaching to be more humble than the straw, more tolerant than the tree, respectful to all and asking no respect for ourselves, we may follow His method of chanting the Holy Names. We also pray that we may hold the shoes of those who chant in this way on our foreheads out of respect, and so be empowered to purify the world of all the distasteful refuse of temporary and useless things that have been foisted on it by the sense enjoyers, the karmis, jnanis and others who lack discrimination, who torture our eyes and render useless our ability to see.” (Vol. II, p. 87-88)

“The *aṣṭa-kālīya-līlā* about which you have heard from the Vaishnavas in Vrindavan should be highly regarded, no doubt. But the way in which these pastimes are conceived of in the contaminated state is totally corrupt. Some fortunate individuals are capable of knowing these things after chanting for a long time, for that is the identity of the true self. But it can only be known after one is freed of mental contaminations. With the awakening of this spiritual identity, one automatically has constant cognition of his spiritual form. Those who say that they can teach or reveal this identity are practicing a kind of deception; it cannot be done. On the other hand, if a devotee receives some inspiration after sincerely chanting for a long time, he should go to the sad-guru or advanced devotees and ask for it to be confirmed and purified by them. The spiritual identity has eleven aspects [*ekādaśa-bhāva*].

There are many cases of unscrupulous gurus who artificially force-feed these designations on unqualified practitioners, but we cannot call this the mark of spiritual perfection. Those who have achieved the perfection of being fixed in their spiritual identity (*svarūpa-siddhi*) have attained such a realization through internal revelation and the spiritual master’s only involvement in these matters is to help the further advancement of the disciple... As a practitioner progresses toward spiritual perfection, all these things are revealed naturally within the heart that sincerely seeks service.” (Vol. II, pp. 89-90)

“No one should reduce his service to the Lord, even unto his last breath... The only real necessity in this human form of life, which can produce the only true value, is Hari kirtan. Leading a life of lethargy in the name of worshiping in solitude is one type of deception; meaningless poverty in the name of renunciation is another. These are unnecessary as they obstruct Hari kirtan. Hold off living in a secluded cottage for many lifetimes, for your mind will lead you to engage in subtle or hidden sense gratification. I advise you to rather begin by engaging your every act in the service of Krishna. We should adopt the kind of renunciation taught in Narottama’s *Prārthanā* and *Prema-bhakti-candrikā*; in

other words, one that is not just for show. Narottama prays:

ṣad-rasa-bhojana dūre parihari kabe vraja māgiyā khāiba madhukarī

‘When will I completely renounce enjoying the six kinds of taste (ṣad-rasa) and simply live on begged food in Vraja?’ (Prārthanā)

“With this mental attitude, we should attempt to spread the glories of the spiritual master and Mahaprabhu, and in this way, we will win Mahaprabhu’s blessings and be able to truly worship the Lord’s name. With this attitude, it is possible to even ride through North Gopalapuram in the Madras Gaudiya Math’s limousine dressed as a sannyasi without being an imposter or a hypocrite. There is no need to follow the example of Kuliya’s [name withheld], who falsely dresses as a babaji and makes a show of renunciation while engaging in sense gratification. Renunciation is a matter of the heart. There is a big difference between those who misuse the trappings of renunciation and those who follow in the footsteps of King Janaka or Ramananda Raya. But internal renunciation, or balanced renunciation (yukta-vairāgya), does not mean becoming a Ravana while externally imitating King Janaka or Ramananda Raya or misusing their example. You may make an artificial show of renunciation in this way, but never expect it to produce any positive results.” (Vol. II, pp. 100-101)

“Every one of the senses is engaged in protecting the body as a whole, and if they are reluctant to do so, the entire body is to some extent adversely affected. In the same way, every individual must serve the society as a whole, otherwise it will experience some degree of loss. In view of this, all those who seek the good of human society have a duty to engage in simultaneously serving the Vaishnavas, showing compassion to the living beings, and chanting the Holy Name. Anything that is favorable to this principle should be accepted, and whatever goes against it must be rejected.” (Vol. I, p. 11)

“The name of the Lord and the Lord Himself are not two separate things, but one. When the sound of the Holy Name passes through the lips, the conditioned sense of hearing and consciousness start to process the sound as though it were a material sound and that is the way it is indeed perceived. As a result, only the external ear hears it. The other senses and the mind, which is the collector of sensory experience, are envious of the ear, which they consider to be an equal partner. The result is that such chanting does not result in the cleansing of contaminants or anarthas. We do not even have the capacity to know intellectually that the Name and the Lord of the Name are one. But just as one of the Vedic sacraments for the young child is to have the ear pierced, when our spiritual ear has been pierced by the Holy Name, the other senses give up their envy of the sense of hearing. They no longer quibble with the ear, which alone can perceive the transcendental sound. Then the flood of prema pours forth

from all of the spiritual senses and cleans away the contaminants of opposition and enviousness. With that, the Lord of the Name's beautiful form, qualities, associates and pastimes are revealed in the Name Itself and are experienced by the chanter as something quite distinct from his previous experiences within the material world. The kinds of worries and distractions of the mind typical of the conditioned living being cannot remain.

"We should constantly pray to the Holy Name for His mercy. One who is still in a contaminated state should not engage in smaraṇa of the daily cycle of the Lord's pastimes (aṣṭa-kālīya-līlā). When we engage in chanting the Holy Names, we are simultaneously engaged in hearing and the opportunity for remembering is included in that. One should not engage in such meditation on false premises." (Vol. II, pp. 118-119)

"If you establish centers in England with deities of Jagannath and Sriman Mahaprabhu, offer Indian-style preparations and distribute the maha prasad, then the English will gradually develop a sympathy for India and faith in devotional practices, with the result that they will contribute to the Lord's service. I pray for the day when the people of that country will sing the names of Gaura and honor the transcendental prasad from the temple with a spiritual attitude; then they will understand true spiritual life and cultivate Krishna consciousness." (Vol. II, pp. 141, dated May 27, 1934)

Near the time of his departure, Srila Prabhupada had the following to say about chanting the Holy Name and the difference between Vaishnava śrāddha (or oblations to the deceased parents) and the traditional śrāddha of Hindu ritualism:

"Your father has gone to join the eternal abode of Jagannath Puri. Jagannath Puri is Vaikuntha itself. Whoever quits the body while chanting the Holy Names attains the eternal abode of the Lord. Anything that is done according to mundane considerations results in rebirth in the material world. The various rituals in the Vedic literature are within the realm of karma and have material sense objects as their goal. However, devotees dedicated to chanting the Holy Name can perform oblations to their deceased ancestors with the Lord's prasad. Making oblations with any other kind of foodstuff is not a proof of intelligence. The fruitive rituals are an invitation to entanglement in the results of action."

Those who are dedicated to the chanting of the Holy Name have no consideration of enjoying such results. Their relatives do have the duty, however, of making an offering to the Lord and then making an oblation with the prasad for the well being of the departed soul. As a part of the same procedure, they should invite the devotees of the Lord for a feast of prasad and a 24-hour kirtan festival (harināma-yajña), a sacrifice to the Holy Name should be held. This is

the procedure that is approved by the devotional scriptures. Other people who have some mixed conception of devotion may have a different understanding according to their state of advancement, but we do not give much credence to them.” (Vol. III, pp. 10-11)

Prabhupada wrote the following about Nāma-bhajana and its fruits: “While engaged in chanting the Holy Names, we are cultivating Krishna consciousness and ridding ourselves of any desire for sense enjoyments or the liberation of knowledge of Brahman. These contaminations are gradually destroyed by the chanting. Other than the chanting of the Holy Names, there is no other means of ridding ourselves of misfortune. Distinct from the names of this world, the Name descends into the world from Vaikuntha and gives us the ear-piercing sacrament (karṇa-bheda saṁskāra). The ear that has been purified by this sacrament is eligible to hear the Holy Name. Once we have truly heard the Vaikuntha name, we become conscious of the Vaikuntha form, its presence and its joy, which protect us from the so-called pleasures of the material world. I am the object of Krishna’s enjoyment; when Krishna is pleased with my eternal form, He draws me to Him and His transcendental beauty bewitches me. As Krishna’s qualities become progressively revealed, I am taken, defeated, by His unlimited spiritual virtues. Then Krishna too begins to glorify the qualities of my spiritual form, causing my enthusiasm to increase. If my friends and relatives are favorable, I will be able to serve the Lord’s associates in my spiritual body. At this point, the intense desire or lobha to participate in Krishna’s divine sports arises. The Lord’s name, form and qualities that are appropriate to the service of these lilaś lead the devotee to an understanding of the Vedanta Sutra’s following sutra: sva-śabdonmānābhyaḥ ca (2.3.23). At this point, I can finally understand the Bhagavata’s words, ‘By hearing which, one becomes devoted to Him’ (yāḥ śrutvā tat-paro bhavet).” (Vol. III, pp. 14-15)

Srila Prabhupada had the following to say about the characteristics of those indifferent to the service of the Lord and the duty of their well-wishers: “The minds of those demons who merely imitate the devotees are not cleansed by their devotional activities. They thus take offenders to the Holy Names to be their spiritual masters. Because they see no way of satisfying their tongue and genitals with the true chanters of the Holy Name, they see them as representatives of Death, about to strike them with the bite of mortality. The motto of the Gaudiya Math is taken from Mahaprabhu’s Śikṣāṣṭaka, param vijayate śrī-krṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam—‘May the chanting of Krishna’s name be ever victorious!’ ” (Vol. III, pp. 36-38)

Srila Prabhupada gave the following advice about śrāddha for those who have taken complete shelter of the Holy Name: “Those sons who do not chant the Holy Name and are unable to resist public criticism should follow the rituals

according to the Vedic brahminical system. Mr. **** will not object to this. Scriptures do not approve of thinking of departed devotees as pretas, or disembodied spirits. My disciple **** and others who have taken shelter of the Holy Name take prasad every day. You should not be preoccupied by the Smarta vidhi. Keep your distance from the improper understanding that after death a Vaishnava becomes a disembodied spirit and should be given oblations of unoffered foodstuffs." (Vol. III, pp. 41-42)

"Those engaged in chanting the Holy Name experience a state of astonishing rapture when they reach the advanced stage." (Vol. III, pp. 86)

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Prabhupada's Divine Lectures

Some notes taken from a speech given by Srila Prabhupada at the Nabadwip Dham Promotion Committee meeting (*Navadvīpa-dhāma-pracāriṇī Sabhā*). Speaking before the Nabadwip Dham Promotion Committee, it is first of all necessary to mention the name of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur. If the glories of the Holy Dham have been spread and continue to be spread it is as a result of his transcendental mercy and through the power of his uncommon activities. In a very short time, all of his books have gone through numerous editions, and more continue to be published. Many educated people are hearing the glories of the pure, eternal religion as taught by Sriman Mahaprabhu. From East Bengal to distant Assam and southern Ganjam district in Orissa, many people thirsting for the truth have accepted His teachings. A great deal of preaching activity is going on in the great city of Calcutta, too. Many respectable, educated people are showing their esteem for this truth. Of course, it is true that there are many wicked people in the business of religion who do not give this message the respect it deserves, but anyone who has the slightest love for the truth will be able to see that these people are envious and filled with falsehood. We have spoken of this eternal religious truth to some sophisticated people in Dhaka, college professors, and they answered me, "We never had realized that there was such a high level of philosophical understanding in Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's religion." Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur wrote so many books on devotional service, but for various reasons he never had the opportunity to widely distribute them all. We are now attempting to do so on his behalf.

The goal of the Nabadwip Dham Promotion Committee—giving up bad association

I am glad to announce that today the Nabadwip Dham Promotion Committee is beginning to achieve its actual purpose. The most ordinary people, entangled in work and sense gratification, are beginning to give up or take sannyas from bad association. This is a realization of Sri Gaurasundara's description of the essence of Vaishnava behavior as the rejection of bad association:

asatsaṅga-tyāga ei vaisnava-ācāra.

In this world, we are looking on matter in the enjoying spirit or as an object of enjoyment—that is—association with women or looking on things from the point of view arising out of association with women. Giving up this way of looking at matter is the renunciation of bad association or taking sannyas.

The Bhagavata says:

tato duḥsaṅgam utsṛjya satsu sajjeta buddhimān

santa evāsyā chindanti mano-vyāsaṅgam uktibhiḥ

“An intelligent person should therefore abandon all bad association and stay in the company of devotees. Only such holy persons can cut through one’s unhealthy mental attachments through the use of their powerful words.” (SB 11.26.26)

The character of a liberated sannyasi or paramahamsa

A man might well have the external appearance of being a householder but still become a paramahamsa Vaishnava, the highest stage of sannyas. A paramahamsa Vaishnava may also have the appearance of being in another station of life—vanaprastha, brahmachari or sannyasi. The meaning of sannyas is renouncing all extraneous efforts and devoting all activities, body, mind and soul, to the service of Krishna. Thus even the lowliest Vaishnava is the best of all sannyasis.

Paramahamsa is another name for Vaishnava. Advaita Prabhu said to Nityananda Prabhu, “You are the master of the paramahamsa path.” The Bhagavata also states: “One should renounce the four orders of life along with their symbols and transcend all regulations” (*sa-līṅgān āśramāṁs tyaktvācared avidhi-gocarāḥ*—SB 11.18.28).

It is not necessary to imitate the Vaishnava acharyas, but to serve by following in their footsteps

The dress of the Vaishnava spiritual masters is that of the paramahamsas. They are always resolute in their service of the Lord. It does not befit pretentious disciples and atheists like ourselves to take the spiritual master's dress. Nowadays so many people who do not even engage in devotional service take the dress meant for the most advanced stage of spiritual realization and renunciation and engage in immoral activities. We therefore say that it is more suitable to adopt the dress appropriate to our work and station in life and turn inwardly toward the service of the Lord.

Offenses to the Gurus and the Vaishnavas are the root cause of the drought of pure kirtan

There is a drought of kirtan in the world today, and its cause is the disregard for the disciplic succession of spiritual masters. The kirtan that is going on is materialistic kirtan, it is conducted for business purposes, for accumulating money, women and worldly fame, for the pleasure of the senses. The pleasure of Krishna's senses or His satisfaction is not a consideration. Mahaprabhu referred to tauryātriika, i.e., the musical arts of dancing, singing and playing instruments, as a vice. Even so, when used in the service of Krishna, they are the best form of worship. If we analyze kirtan as it is conducted today, however, it falls into the category of vice.

The mercy of Bhaktivinoda Thakur and the vow of his followers

Not so long ago, so-called cultured society thought that Goloka or Vaikuntha were places like London or Paris, or perhaps just of the imagination. In his desire to serve the Lord, Bhaktivinoda Thakur understood the fully-conscious, immaterial nature of the Dham. He mercifully wrote many books to communicate his realization to the people of the world, many of which dealt with the Dham's spiritual nature. The Lord's abode is a manifestation of His glories. The eleven kinds of heretical sects—Auls, Bauls, Kartabhaja, Neraneri, Atibari, Churadhari, Gauranagari, Prakrita Sahajiya, Sakhibheki, Smartas, and Jati Goswamis—and others have all brought the name of Mahaprabhu into disrepute. Each of these sects claimed identity with the spiritual religion of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Bhaktivinoda Thakur made all efforts to rid

Mahaprabhu's pure religion of this shame and his followers continue to do so.

On Saturday, February 26, 1925, the Nabadwip Dham parikrama began. The previous evening, Srila Prabhupada spoke before a large assembly in a way that touched everyone's heart. I was not able to resist the desire to quote portions of this lecture here. Saintly persons tell us that the desires for sense enjoyment and liberation are like two witches that are hovering, casting their spells on us. They warn us not to allow ourselves to be tempted and embrace these witches. It is a waste of time to bathe in the Ganges in order to win a wife or husband whose mortal body will one day rot. If we are fortunate enough that the light emanating from Krishna's toenails illuminates our hearts, then we will hear the sound of His flute and, as servants of Krishna's beloved gopis, will throw aside all duties and run to meet Him on the site of the rāsa dance. When we arrive there, our male or female bodies will merge with the material energy. The Sakhibhekkis think of Krishna as an object of sense gratification and dress their material male body up to look like one of Krishna's girlfriends. This is nothing more than self-deception and cheating of others; such a corruption of intelligence will not affect anyone whose heart has been penetrated by the rays of light coming from Krishna's toenails. Sixty thousand sages in the Dandaka forest saw Ramachandra and were enthralled by His beauty. When they came to the end of their lives in male bodies, they took birth as gopis in the transcendental abode of Vraja.

Gentlemen! All of you are seeking your own ultimate good. Give up all forms of pretension—whether artificially taking a type of dress, or artificially making a display of spiritual emotion or devotion. Give up the worship of women and effeminacy. Surrender yourself to the eternal service of Srimati Radharani and become handmaidens of Sri Rupa Manjari. Just as Radha and Her girlfriends are always totally absorbed in the service of Krishna, and just as the manjaris are always engaged in the service of Radha and her eight chief sakhis, we should also serve Krishna, the divine Cupid, by satisfying His desires in spiritual bodies as divine females. When bewildered by external considerations, the various goddesses or human women like Rudrani, Indrani, Brahmani, Varunani, Tara, Bharati, or Svaha think, "My mortal husband is Rudra, Indra, Brahma, or some other god or human." However, when they realize their eternal spiritual nature, they recognize that Krishna alone is their eternal husband and that Radharani is His most beloved. Therefore, the best way to serve Krishna is to become the handmaiden of Srimati Radharani and Her girlfriends and servants. Someone who offers everything he has to the Lord is said to be liberated. Someone who holds back on making such a sacrifice is said to be bound or indifferent to the Lord's service.

tomāra kanaka bhogera janaka kanakera dvāre sevaha mādhava kāminīra kāma nahe tava dhāma tāhāra mālika kevala yādava vaisṇavī pratiṣṭhā tāte kara

niṣṭhā tāhā nā bhajile labhibe raurava

“Your money is a source of sense enjoyment; use it to serve Madhava. Desiring to charm women is not your business; Krishna is their only true enjoyer. Be determined to attain the prestige of being a Vaishnava. If you do not strive for this, you will end up in hell.” (Vaiṣṇava ke?) Jharu Thakur did not think of his wife as an object of enjoyment, but rather engaged her in the worship of Krishna. Everyone knows the story of Bilvamangala and Chintamani. Chintamani said to Bilvamangala, “If you had as much attachment for Krishna as you do for my body of flesh and blood, if you renounced your attraction for mundane beauty and turned it to the beautiful form of the divine cupid, Krishna, then how much you would gain!” Everyone should make an effort to understand this invaluable advice and give up his identification with the male or female body. As soon as Bilvamangala stopped seeing Chintamani as a woman, that is, as an object for his personal enjoyment, and started to see her as an object of service, then Krishna immediately appeared to him in the form of a transcendental Chintamani.

The idea that we can use Krishna for our enjoyment is hopeless. Krishna Himself is the enjoyer and not the object of enjoyment. Gauranga is not a playboy, or nāgara, that we can enjoy Him. This is the very limit of misconception born out of the reluctance to serve. Upon encountering his guru, Somagiri, Silhan Mishra gave up his superficial idea that Krishna was an object of personal enjoyment. He then changed his name and became known as LilaSuka and Bilvamangala. Just as all men and women are meant for the service of Krishna, so too is all money to be engaged in service of the Lord. Money is not to be used as a means for enjoying material nature, nor is it to be used for gaining mundane prestige by artificially renouncing it. When our understanding is false, we see money as a means to sense enjoyment; we should approach it with divine intelligence and use it as a means of serving the Lord. The Upanishads say that everything is in fact Brahman. Sarvam khalv idam brahma. When we use our money to serve the Lord, it is Brahman in the form of money. Such transcendental money is conducive to the worship of the Lord and the service of the Vaishnavas. Rejecting the use of things that favor devotional service is nothing more than false renunciation or phalgu-vairāgya; it is done only for show or to gain worldly prestige. Engage all your worldly possessions in the service of God. Be careful! Do not seek money, women or worldly prestige through devotional service, and never take refuge in greed, honor, prestige, hypocrisy, or forbidden acts.

Jayadeva Goswami wrote Gīta-govinda, his lyrical poem in twelve chapters; Srila Ramananda Raya wrote Jagannātha-vallabha-nāṭaka; Rupa Goswami wrote Viḍagdha-mādhava; Chandi Das and Vidyapati wrote many songs; Prabodhananda Saraswati wrote Rādhā-rasa-sudhā-nidhi; Raghunath Das

Goswami wrote Vilāpa-kusumāñjalī; Krishna Das Kaviraj wrote Govinda-līlāmṛta. Visvanath Chakravarti Thakur wrote Kṛṣṇa-bhāvanāmṛta. You will be able to read all these books when you become qualified to enter into the spiritual mood of erotic love that permeates them. This will come about when you are completely free of the grasp of thoughts leading to material sense desire. This storehouse of good fortune will then be opened to you and you will be its genuine heirs. When your commitment to Krishna's service is absolute, then your natural, eternal relation to Krishna in one of five divine relationships will be opened to you. No one has any authority to serve Krishna without first being liberated. Krishna belongs to Radharani alone; without serving Radharani no one can ever be worthy of serving Krishna. So develop the anxiety to become Radharani's servant girl and slave, with a natural predilection for love of Krishna in the conjugal mood.

Remembering Srila Prabhupada's Disappearance

Our most worshipable spiritual master Om Vishnupada 108 Srimad Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur was like the sun in the firmament of the Gaudiya Vaishnava world. After displaying his pastimes in this world for sixtythree years, at about 5:30 A.M., on Thursday, January 1, 1937, a kṛṣṇā caturthī, he entered the eternal abode, joining Radha and Krishna in the predawn pastimes (niśānta-līlā) of their eternal 24-hour cycle of activities in Vraja. At the end of every night, Radha and Krishna lie intertwined in embrace, becoming as one body. It is at this moment, when their united form of Gaurasundara is eternally manifest, that Varshabhanavi-dayita Das, their servant, joined them. This moment is considered a Wednesday by Indian calculations, according to which a new day begins with the sunrise. Thirty-two years have passed since Prabhupada ended his earthly sojourn. One by one, many of his disciples have already entered the eternal abode, each of them attaining direct service to Krishna according to his own qualifications. Those who remain on this earth continue to follow his instructions and his teachings so that they can become worthy to rejoin and serve him directly when the moment arrives.

bhajite bhajite samaya āsile e deha chāriyā diba

"I will continue to worship until the moment arrives when I shall give up this body." About two months before entering his eternal abode, Srila Prabhupada went to Puri Dham and stayed there at his bhajan kutir near the beach. To all

those who came to see him, he gave the warning: “Get busy and worship the Lord undeviatingly. Not much time is left.” His disciples heard him constantly repeat the verses of Rupa Goswami’s first Govardhanāṣṭakam and those of Raghunath Das’s Govardhana-vāsa-prārthanā-daśakam.

Mahaprabhu Himself used to see Govardhana in the sand dunes by the ocean, and the Yamuna River in the blue waters of the ocean itself. For Him, the gardens in Puri were Vrindavan itself. Overwhelmed with the loving mood of Radha, Gaurasundara was day and night absorbed in the separation from Krishna, uttering the words:

kāhāṁ mora prāṇa-nātha muralī-vadana kāhāṁ karōṁ kāhāṁ pāṁ vrajendra-nandana kāhāre kahiba kebā jāne mora duḥkha vrajendra-nandana binu phāṭe mora buka

“Where is the Lord of my life, Krishna, the flute player? What can I do to find him? Where is the son of Maharaj Nanda? To whom can I speak to of my distress? Who would even understand me? Without the son of Nanda Maharaj, my heart splits in two.” (CC 2.2.15-16)

With tears washing over his face, Srila Prabhupada would also recite other verses from the Chaitanya Charitamrita that revealed Mahaprabhu’s heartfelt emotions. In this way he remained absorbed in Krishna consciousness. Srila Prabhupada stayed in his cottage amongst the Puri sand dunes for the appearance day of Madhvacharya, Govardhana Puja, and the disappearance day of Srila Gaura Kishor Das Babaji. He announced that the refrains from the two aṣṭakas mentioned above were special mantras for worshiping Govardhana Hill:

pratyāśāṁ me tvāṁ kuru govardhana pūrṇām

“O Govardhana, fulfill every one of my wishes!”

nija-nikāta-nivāsam dehi govardhana tvam

“O Govardhana, please give me residence somewhere near you!”

Some time before coming to Puri, Prabhupada had spent the month of Purushottam in Vraja Dham. He left Calcutta for Mathura on August 12, 1936. While in Mathura, he stayed at Shivalaya Bhavan, a house in the cantonment area. During the time he was residing there, he remained absorbed in the intoxicating ecstasy of the Holy Names. He daily traveled to Vrindavan to Madhumangala Kunj, where he gave classes on the Bhagavatam. During this stay, he also inaugurated a place of worship at Govardhana.

Starting October 17, 1934, Srila Prabhupada observed the Karttik vrata in the

Mathura area along with his devotees. During this time, he set the example of hearing and chanting about the Lord's *aṣṭa-kālīyā līlā*.

On October 29, he discovered the place in the Sat Ghara neighborhood of Mathura city where Rupa Goswami would come for darshan of Madhavendra Puri's Gopal deity. Then on November 1, he and his party visited various sites in the Mathura area, such as Chandra Sarovara, Pasauli, Gauri Tirtha, and Paigaon. At each stop, he gave inspired talks on the lilas which took place in these spots, leaving his audience amazed with his descriptions of the Lord's ever-fresh pastimes.

On October 9, 1932, the appearance day of Sri Madhvacharya, Srila Prabhupada and countless devotees set the example of undertaking the 84 kros pilgrimage tour of Vraja mandala. Stopping at every place where Krishna had engaged in His pastimes, He lectured and arranged for Hari-kathā to be spoken in various different languages for the benefit of the devotees who had come from different regions of India. He himself lectured in Hindi on Rupa Goswami's *Upadeśāmṛta* to a large assembly of Vraja residents and scholars on the holy piece of land where Radha Kund and Shyama Kund meet. A photograph of Prabhupada instructing his disciples near Radha Kund and Lalita Kund during the parikrama was published in the weekly *Gauḍīya* magazine. It was a beautiful sight to see the numerous tents that housed the pilgrims. Wherever the devotees camped, a small city came into being.

In 1935, Radharani's personal companion, Srila Prabhupada, observed the Karttik month austerities (*ūrjā-vrata* or *Dāmodara-vrata*) on the shores of Radha Kund. During this period, he spoke on the Upanishads, Chaitanya Charitamrita, and Srimad Bhagavatam, circumambulated Radha Kund daily, and we listened to him give descriptions of the Lord's *aṣṭa-kālīyā līlā*. He took this opportunity to inaugurate the "Vraja Dham Publicity Committee" (*Vraja-dhāma-pracāriṇī Sabhā*). On November 4, Srila Prabhupada installed deities at the Kunja Bihari Math at Radha Kund, and two days later, he inaugurated Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur's *puṣpa-samādhi* memorial and *bhāva-sevā* (serving the deities according to the *aṣṭa-kālīyā līlā*) at Vrajananda-sukhada Kunja. Srimati Radharani and Sri Radha Kund were Prabhupada's inspiration and lifegiving elixir. Whenever he spoke of Sri Radha's mercy or glorified Her, Prabhupada would completely lose himself in divine ecstasy. In particular, he relished the following verse from Prabodhananda's *Rādhā-rasa-sudhā-nidhi*.

yasyāḥ kadāpi vasanāñcala-khelanothadhanyātidhanya-pavanena kṛtartha-mānī yogīndra-durgama-gatir madhusūdano'pi tasyā namo 'stu vṛṣabhānu-bhuvo diśe'pi

“Even though He Himself is the unattainable objective of the greatest yogis, whenever Madhusudana gets a scent of the most fortunate breezes that have been produced by the movement of Radharani’s clothes, He considers Himself to have been fulfilled. I therefore even offer my obeisance to the general direction where the daughter of King Vrishabhanu happens to be.” (RRSN 2)

Prabhupada’s eyes would fill up with tears and his voice would break with emotion when he recited this verse. He also cherished Raghunath Das Goswami’s Vilāpa-kusumāñjali, the five chapters of the Rāsa-līlā, the Gopī-gīta and Bhramara-gīta from the Bhagavatam, Rupa Goswami’s Stava-mālā and Raghunath’s Stavāvalī. We personally heard him relish verses from these books many times.

Srila Prabhupada composed a translation in Bengali verse of Rupa Goswami’s Upadeśāmṛta. The following is his version of the ninth verse:

*vaikuṇṭha haite śreṣṭha mathurā nagarī janama labhiyā jathā kṛṣṇa-candra hari
mathurā haite śreṣṭha vrindāvana-dhāma jathā sādhiyāche hari rāsotsava-kāma
vrindāvana haite śreṣṭha govardhana-śaila giridhārī gāndharvīkā jatha krīḍā
kaila govardhana haite śreṣṭha rādhā-kuṇḍa-tāṭa premāmṛta bhāsāila gokula-
lampaṭa govardhana giriṭāṭa rādhā-kuṇḍa chāri anyatra je kare nija kuñja
puṣpa-bārī nirbodha tāhāra sama keha nāhi āra kuñja-tīra sarvottama sthāna
premādhāra*

“The city of Mathura is superior to Vaikuntha, for the moonlike Krishna took His birth there. Finer than Mathura is Vrindavan because Krishna held His Rasa dance there. Govardhana hill, where the holder of the hill, Giridhari Krishna, and His beloved Gandharvika so frequently enjoyed their intimate pastimes is superior to even Vrindavan. Even more auspicious than Govardhana is Radha Kund, where the playboy of Gokula unleashed a flood of ecstatic love. Anyone who makes his flower garden and cottage somewhere other than this Radha Kund at the foot of Govardhana is surely the most unfortunate creature; no one is more foolish than such a person. Radha Kund is the most wonderful place in creation; it is the reservoir of love.”

And this is Prabhupada’s rendition of verse 11:

*śrīmatī rādhikā kṛṣṇa-kāntā-śiromāṇi kṛṣṇa-priya madhye tānra sama nāhi
dhanī muni-gaṇa sāstre rādhā-kuṇḍera varṇane gāndharvīkā tulya-kuṇḍa
karaye gaṇane nāradādi priya-varge je prema durlabha anya sādhakete tāhā
kabhu nā sulabha kintu rādhā-kuṇḍe snāna jei jana kare madhura-rasete tāra
snāne siddhi dhare aprākṛta-bhāve sadā jugala-sevana rādhā-pāda-padma
labhe sei hari-jana*

“Srimati Radharani is foremost amongst all of Krishna’s damsels; of them, no one is Her equal in beauty or good fortune. The sages and the scriptures have said that Her pond, Radha Kund, is in every way equivalent to Her. The kind of divine love that is inaccessible to Narada and the other sages is never attained easily by other sadhakas. However, if they bathe just once in the delicious waters of Radha Kund, they will experience the flavors of prema in the mood of conjugal love; they will win the transcendental service to the Divine Couple and the lotus feet of Srimati Radharani.”

And he concludes the Upadeśāmṛta with the following couplet:

śrī-vārṣabhānavī devī kabe dayita-dāsere kuṇḍa-tīre sthāna dibe nija-jana kare

“When will the daughter of Vrishabhanu make this servant of Her Beloved Her own and give him a place on the banks of Radha Kund?”

In these translations, Srila Prabhupada was unable to keep his internal mood toward the Divine Couple concealed any longer. Similarly, he also stated that the meaning of his own name, Varshabhanavidayita Das (“servant of the beloved of the daughter of Vrishabhanu) was made clear by the last two lines of the following verse (no. 102) from Raghunath Das’s Vilāpa-kusumāñjali,

*āśā-bharair amṛta-sindhu-mayaiḥ kathañcit kālo mayātigamitaḥ kila sāmpratam
hi tvāṁ cet kṛpāṁ mayi vidhāsyasi naiva kim me prāṇair vrajena ca varoru
bakārināpi*

“O beautiful-thighed Srimati Radharani, I have spent a few moments revealing to You the hopes that well up in me like an ocean of ambrosia. If now You are not merciful to me, then of what use to me is my very own life, and what is the use of Vraja? Indeed, the enemy of Baka Himself is of no avail to me whatsoever!”

Bhaktivinoda Thakur’s similar sentiments are found in the following couplet:

ātapa-rahita sūraja nāhi jāni rādhā-virahita kṛṣṇa nāhi māni

“Just as there is no such thing as a sun without heat or light, I do not accept a Krishna who is without Srimati Radharani!” (Gītāvalī, Rādhāṣṭaka, 8)

Prabhupada saw the Yoga Pith in Mayapur, where Mahaprabhu appeared in this world, as being Mahavana of Gokula, the place where Krishna passed His early infancy with Mother Yashoda. He considered the house of Srivasa Pandit to be Vrindavan, the site of the Rasa dance itself; to him, the site of Chaitanya Math at Chandrasekhara Acharya’s house was nothing less than Govardhana itself. Right next to that spot, he had his bhajan kutir built and a tank excavated; he called the

tank Radha Kund.

From 1897, he made his home there, annually observing the Cāturmāsyā-vrata in an exemplary fashion according to the Vaishnava scriptures: he would cook haviṣyānna himself and then eat it directly off the ground without using a plate; he would also sleep on the ground without a pillow. Srila Prabhupada also displayed an exemplary character in observing a vow of celibacy from childhood. On his father Bhaktivinoda Thakur's orders, he took bhāgavatī dikṣā, esoteric initiation into the Bhagavata Dharma, from the avadhūta, Paramahamsa Srila Gaura Kishor Das Goswami. This took place in January of 1901.

While staying in Mayapur in 1905, Srila Prabhupada followed in the footsteps of Hari Das Thakur, undertaking a vow of chanting ten crores (a billion) of Holy Names, chanting a minimum of three lakhs (300,000) every single day. In 1909, he had a cottage built on the site of Chandrasekhara Acharya's house where he continued to follow his vrata, worshiping Sri Guru, Gauranga, Gandharvika and Giridhari, and visualizing himself on the banks of Radha Kund.

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur disappeared in 1914 on the disappearance day of Srila Gadadhar Pandit Goswami, the dark moon day of the month of Asharh. In the early morning of November 17, 1915, Utthāna Ekadasi, Srila Gaura Kishor Das Babaji entered into his eternal pastimes. Srila Prabhupada was living at the Yoga Pith at that time. Having experienced the disappearance of the two most important spiritual guides in his life, Srila Prabhupada was overcome with a sense of loss and separation. Feeling helpless in the absence, he spent nights lamenting in his grief. Then one night, near dawn, he had a dream in which he saw the five members of the Pancha Tattva present in the nāṭa-mandira, accompanied by Jagannath Das Babaji, Bhaktivinoda Thakur, Gaura Kishor Das Babaji, and all of Mahaprabhu's other associates.

The Lord spoke, "Saraswati! Don't give up hope, but preach My message with unflagging enthusiasm. Immeasurable wealth and countless people are waiting for you. You are neither helpless nor powerless." After having this amazing dream vision, Srila Prabhupada became joyful and enthusiastic again.

On Sriman Mahaprabhu's appearance day, March 7, 1918, in Chandrasekhara's house in Sri Mayapur, Srila Prabhupada took the renounced order of life according to the pure Vedic directives. This institution of the renounced order of life, or tridaṇḍi-sannyāsa, is particular to the Vaishnava religion. It is mentioned in the Upanishads, Manu-saṁhitā, Srimad Bhagavatam, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, and many other scriptures. In particular, the custom has furthermore been preserved to this day in the Ramanuja sampradaya. From the time of his official renunciation, Prabhupada spent the remaining 18 years of his life preaching the chanting of the Holy Names, establishing temples and

installing deities; he discovered lost holy places, set up printing presses on which he published periodicals and books in numerous languages. Through these books and his own programs of preaching, Srila Prabhupada taught Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's gospel, His philosophy and His ethics. After devoting his life to this mission, Srila Prabhupada joined Radha and Govinda in Their eternal pastimes. Prabhupada's zeal for Hari-kathā was so great that he would go on speaking hour after hour and would still get irritated if someone even hinted that it was time to eat. Prabhupada used to say that to awaken a single bewildered individual to his identity as a servant of Krishna required an effort equivalent to gallons and gallons of blood.

If any of his disciples misunderstood the Vaishnava philosophy and went astray, he would shed tears of sadness, so great was his affection for them. When it came to defeating atheistic philosophical opinions, he could be harder than a thunderbolt, but when talking about the religion of love, he could be softer than a rose. If any temple director indicated that there were difficulties due to an insufficiency of funds, Prabhupada would immediately arrange for money to be sent so that the devotees would be spared from any unnecessary suffering. He loved his disciples so much that he would become extremely preoccupied if any of them fell ill. The love of a million parents for their children taken together could not compare with the love he felt for those who had taken shelter of him. And should anyone come to Srila Prabhupada burdened with worries, they found that their troubles, in only a few moments, seemed to vanish by the force of his boundless affection. Even Srila Prabhupada's chastisements seemed sweet. We considered it a point of pride to be chastised by him; we thought it a sign of being accepted. And if we saw his lotus face light up with satisfaction, we would consider all our hard work to have been worthwhile.

We would think, like Bhaktivinoda Thakur, *tomāra sevāya duḥkha haya jata seo to parama sukha sevā-sukha-duḥkha parama sampad nāśaye avidyā-duḥkha*
“However much suffering we undergo for your service, we consider it a joy. The happiness or distress incurred in serving you is our greatest treasure, because it destroys the miseries of the life of ignorance.” (Śaraṇāgati 16)

On the other hand, if we were not able to fulfill the desires of our spiritual master, we would feel great distress. Whatever we did, our bhajan, our meditation, our efforts to control the mind, our chanting of japa, our austerities and penances, were all for the service of our spiritual master. He was the most dear to Krishna, so if we were able to please him by any means possible—yena kenāpy upāyena—we considered that action to be the best bhajan, the best practice of spiritual life, our everything. If Srila Prabhupada left to go somewhere else, his disciples felt great pain and spent their time thinking of his return. I remember how we would cry and pray for his quick return and now,

thirty-two years have gone in what seems like the twinkling of an eye.

How can such a length of time have passed in this unbearable separation? *kena vā āchaye prāṇa ki sukha lāgiyā*—“What pleasure keeps me living?” (Narottama Das, Prārthanā) I wonder whether I have not committed so many offenses to the Holy Name and to my spiritual master that my heart has become as hard as stone and I can no longer feel the pain of his separation. If I truly had any love for Srila Prabhupada, would I remain here in this world, extending this life that has lost its meaning? O most merciful Gurudeva! Please save this most fallen servant! Even though I am worthless and fallen, please give me a place at your lotus feet. One time, you had given me a place as the least servant of your servants. You even assured us that you would return again and again to this world to deliver the unfortunate living beings. O most merciful Gurudeva! Your heart is so filled with compassion! Prabhu! In spite of the offenses I have committed, knowingly or unknowingly, please give me a place at your feet so that I may serve you. The day before you left this world, you placed your two feet on my chest and gazed at me with your merciful eyes. I am ignorant; I know nothing of scripture and have no ability to discern right from wrong. Even so, I pray to you to purify me, correct me and make me worthy to serve you. Reveal to me my faults and errors, recognize me as the servant of your servant, and make me worthy of your service.

Mahaprabhu said to Murari Gupta:

sei bhakta dhanya je nā chāre prabhura carana sei prabhu dhanya je nā chāre nija-jana durdaive sevaka jadi jāya anya sthāne sei thākura dhanya tāre cule dhari āne

“Fortunate is that devotee who does not give up the shelter of his master, and glorious is that master who does not abandon his servant. If by some misfortune a servant falls down and leaves his service, glorious is that master who pulls him by the hair and brings him back.” (CC 3.4.46-7)

It seems to me that the days I have been given on this earth are winding up; perhaps the sun of my life in this world is near to setting. And yet, I somehow have not awakened. You whispered the Maha Mantra into my right ear and placed the japa mala in my hand, telling me to chant a lakh of Holy Names every single day. But alas! I am still indifferent to the chanting of Krishna’s names. Even though so many of my godbrothers have shown me their own example and have warned about the importance of chanting the Holy Name, I still do not take this duty seriously. Far from feeling love for the Holy Name, I don’t even enjoy chanting. Does this mean that I have committed so many offenses to my spiritual master, the Vaishnavas and the Holy Name that I am forever to be bereft of the

Name's mercy? O Srila Prabhupada! Please give me your blessings; give me strength; give me a taste for chanting the Holy Name! Drive away the fog of bewilderment from my soul! The Hari-bhakti-vilāsa quotes the following verses from scripture about guru tattva:

*harau ruṣṭe gurus trātā gurau ruṣṭe na kaścana tasmāt sarva-prayatnena gurum
eva prasādayet*

“If Krishna is angry, the spiritual master will save you. If the spiritual master is angry, no one can save you. Therefore make all efforts to please your spiritual master.” (HBV 4.360)

*ācāryasya priyam kuryāt prāṇair api dhanair
api karmaṇā manasā vācā sa yāti paramāṁ gatim*

“Do things that are pleasing to your spiritual master with your life and your wealth, with your work, your thoughts and your speech, and you will go to the supreme destination.” (HBV 1.100, from Viṣṇu-smṛti)

*ye gurv-ājñām na kurvanti pāpiṣṭhāḥ puruṣādhamāḥ
na teṣāṁ naraka-kleśānistāro muni-sattama*

“Those who do not obey the commands of their spiritual master are the most sinful, lowest of human beings. O best of the sages, for them there is no salvation from the sufferings of hell.” (HBV 4.367, from Agastya-samhitā)

*yo mantraḥ sa guruḥ sāksāt yo guruḥ sa hariḥ
smṛtaḥ gurur yasya bhavet tuṣṭas tasya tuṣṭo hariḥ svayam*

“The mantra is the guru himself, and the guru is said to be the Lord Himself. If the spiritual master is pleased with his disciple, then the Lord Himself is pleased with that person.” (HBV 4.353, from Vāmana-kalpa)

guru kṛṣṇa-rūpa hana śāstrera pramāṇe guru-rūpe kṛṣṇa kṛpā karena bhakta-gane

“According to the revealed scriptures, the spiritual master is the manifestation of Krishna. Krishna comes in the form of the guru to show His mercy to the devotees.” (CC 1.1.45)

For this reason, we pay our obeisances to Srila Prabhupada as follows:

śrī-gaura-karuṇā-śaktivigrahāya namo’stu te

“We offer obeisance to thee, the embodiment of Gauranga’s power of compassion.”

Just a week prior to his leaving this world, on the morning of December 23, 1936, Srila Prabhupada gave some special instructions to his disciples about the way they should carry on their sadhana and bhajan. Though they were intended for his own disciples, they are of interest for anyone who desires spiritual perfection. Only a few of Srila Prabhupada’s disciples are left in the world, nevertheless, they should pay special attention to these instructions and continually discuss them amongst themselves:

- 1.All of you please preach the message of Rupa and Raghunath with great enthusiasm. The ultimate object of our desires is to become specks of dust at the lotus feet of the followers of Rupa Goswami.
- 2.All of you remain united in submission to the Lord’s form as the repository of devotion (āśraya-vigraha), seeking to satisfy the transcendental senses of the one, non-dual supreme consciousness. Make your way through this impermanent, transitory life in whatever way you can, keeping the goal of worshiping the Lord foremost in your minds. Don’t abandon this goal, even in the face of hundreds of dangers, insults, or persecutions.
- 3.Don’t lose your spirit if you see that the majority of people cannot accept the principle of selfless service to the Supreme Lord. Never abandon your bhajan, hearing and chanting Krishna-kathā, the be-all and end-all of your devotional life. Please always chant the name of the Lord, being humbler than a blade of grass and more tolerant than a tree.
- 4.Our true being and identity is to be the dust at the lotus feet of Sri Rupa Prabhu, life after life. The channel that flows from Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur can never be obstructed. Remember this and vow to double your efforts to fulfill Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur’s desires. Amongst you are many capable and worthy individuals. We seek nothing for ourselves; our only motto is:

ādadānas tṛṇam dantair idam yāce punah punah śrīmad rūpa-padāmbhojadhūliḥ syām janma-janmani

“Taking grass between my teeth, I pray repeatedly that I may become a speck of dust at Sri Rupa Goswami’s lotus feet, birth after birth.” (Raghunath Das Goswami, Muktācarita.)

- 5.In the material world we continuously come into contact with difficulties. There is no need for us to be bewildered by these difficulties, nor should it be our objective to remove them. Rather we should think of what will be left to be attained after all these obstacles are removed. We must learn about our eternal

life while we are still in this world. Our only real obligation is to go beyond duality and to enter that realm of eternal fulfillment.

6.In this world, no person should be a special object of attraction or aversion. All arrangements we make here last only for moments. Our only unavoidable necessity is to seek out the ultimate goal of life.

7.Work together with a single purpose—to win the qualifications to serve the original repository of love for Krishna, Srimati Radharani.

8.May the current of ideas propagated by Rupa Goswami flow throughout the world.

9.May we never under any circumstances become indifferent to the seven-tongued sacrificial flame of the Holy Name. If our attraction to the Holy Name continually increases, we will achieve all perfection.

10.Remain exclusively faithful to the followers of Rupa Goswami and preach Rupa and Raghunath's teachings enthusiastically and fearlessly. Dear Srila Prabhupada! These teachings spoken by you are in no way different from the Vedas. The scripture tells us that *ājñā gurūṇām hy avicaraṇīyā*—“the orders of the spiritual master are not subject to question.” We therefore pray for the ability to follow them to the letter, without any ulterior motive. We pray to you most humbly to take care of us eternally by bestowing upon us clear intelligence, strength of heart, and your blessings.

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The True Spirit of Separation

After Gaura Hari, who descended to purify this age of Kali, made Himself invisible to the eyes of the world, the preaching of His religion of love carried on more or less uninterruptedly up until the time of Baladeva Vidyabhushan. In the time that followed, though there were still many advanced devotees present on the planet, a period of darkness descended on Mahaprabhu's school of devotion. Many heterodox sects came into existence that vocally claimed to be following Mahaprabhu, but in fact were simply using His name to promote their own false

doctrines. The Lord Himself could not tolerate deviation from the truths of the Gaudiya Vaishnava doctrine and He would be greatly pained by misrepresentations of the divine relations between the Lord and His devotees. For this reason, Svarupa Damodar and Rupa Goswami appeared again at the desire of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu through Srila Saccidananda Bhaktivinoda Thakur and Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada, to preserve and protect the doctrines taught by Srila Rupa Goswami. Preaching these doctrines of pure devotion, these two great souls gave great joy to the Lord Himself and to all of his followers in the Gaudiya Vaishnava school.

A Vaishnava poet wrote the following verse about Srila Prabhupada:

*śuddha-bhakti-mata jata upadharma kavalita heriyā lokera mane trāsa hāni
susiddhānta bāṇa upadharma khāna khāna sajanera bārāla ullāsa*

“People were disturbed to see that heterodox sects had swallowed up all the doctrines of pure devotion. Srila Prabhupada came along and fired the arrows of proper theological conclusions, thus bringing all the pious people joy.”

Between them, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur and Srila Prabhupada wrote more than a hundred books on devotional subjects, including translations and commentaries on the Bhagavad Gita, Srimad Bhagavatam, Chaitanya Charitamrita, Chaitanya Bhagavata, etc. By doing so, they performed an indescribable service for Gaudiya Vaishnava society. Today, those who are free from prejudice, who recognize and approve the truth and good qualities in others, lament the absence of these two great acharyas, what to speak of their disciples and granddisciples. Those who follow the teachings and example of these two great acharyas sense their absence sorely. Nevertheless, those who truly feel their separation are fairly rare, for it is beyond the capacity of those who wish to equate materialistic activities with the spiritual to understand the contribution they made—namely their propagation and bestowal of pure devotional service consisting of the culture of those activities that are pleasing to Krishna, without any desire for liberation or sense gratification.

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur appeared in this world in the afternoon of Sunday, Sept. 2, 1834 (Bhadra 18, 1245 Bengali), 352 years after the advent of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. His disappearance took place just before midday on June 23, 1914 (Asharh 9, 1305 Bengali year), which also happened to be the disappearance day of Gadadhar Pandit Goswami. I never had the good fortune to personally see Bhaktivinoda Thakur, though I did have the opportunity to hear of his superhuman glories directly from Srila Prabhupada, both through his spoken word and his writings. On the other hand, it is far beyond my finite capacities to adequately describe all the wonderful things that I heard and witnessed of Srila Prabhupada’s glories during my personal association with him. I saw that he

would not tolerate even the slightest disrespect to the names of Lord Krishna, to His devotees, to His deity form, nor to His person. Once, he was staying as a guest at the house of a famous personality, yet he fasted for three days without his host's knowledge, refusing even to take water out of protest to such disrespect. On another occasion, he was greatly disturbed when he heard a hereditary Goswami speak of Raghunath Das Goswami in terms of his caste of birth. There were many incidents of this type. He could be as fierce as thunder when arguing against heretical doctrines, but when relishing the flavors of pure devotion, he revealed a greater softness than that of a flower, shedding tears of ecstasy. Both these characteristics were seen in his dealings with his disciples, in which he proved his affectionate feelings for them. Srila Prabhupada was the personification of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's message.

Those who have deep love for their spiritual master remained immersed in the ocean of his divine instructions for as long as he was present in this world. They did everything they could to preach and act in a way that fulfilled his desires and experienced the great joy of associating with him directly in the most personal way. Now, however, in his absence, they are overwhelmed by most painful feelings of separation. The pain bursts out from their heart and tears flow from their eyes and onto their chest like the torrents of rain in the month of Shravan. Their minds are disturbed by the desire, never to be again fulfilled, of hearing their guru speak the nectarean topics of Krishna. They repeatedly sing the verses written by Narottama in which he reveals the depth of his loss at being separated from the company of the great Vaishnavas.

je ānila prema-dhana karuṇā pracura hena prabhu kothā gela vaisnava ṭhākura

“My lord, the worshipable Vaishnava, brought us the wealth of love for Krishna out of his unlimited compassion. Alas, where has he gone?” (Prārthanā)

*svarūpa sanātana rūpa raghunātha bhaṭṭa-yuga lokanātha siddhānta-sāgara
śunitām se saba kathā ghucita manera vyathā tabe bhāla haita antara*

“When I heard the divine words of Svarup Damodar, Sanatan, Rupa, Raghunath Das, Raghunath Bhatta and Gopal Bhatta, as well as Lokanath Goswami, the ocean of spiritual knowledge, the anguish of my mind would disappear and my heart would feel restored.” (Prema-bhakti-candrikā)

Lost in this mood of separation, how can any consideration based on worldly competition be of interest to them? How can the witches of the desire for liberation or sense gratification remain hidden in their hearts? Our mundane feelings of attraction and aversion for material objects light the fire of envy, egoism, and hatred so much so that it seems they have the ability to destroy this world. If even a drop of pure affection arises in our hearts for the incarnation of

Mahaprabhu's magnanimity, then no place will remain for these animal propensities like hatred, jealousy, or violence to others.

*harṣāmarṣādibhir bhāvair ākrāntam yasya mānasam
katham tatra mukundasya sphūrti-sambhāvanā bhavet*

“And those who are either overcome or bewildered by the pleasures of union with the objects of sense in terms of facades of physical beauty, fine food, beautiful music, delightful odors and sensual touch, or the anxiety that comes from their non-attainment, can never experience Mukunda, the one who gives (da) us prema, i.e., that which makes a mockery (ku from kutsita) of liberation (mu or mukti). They can never experience Mukunda, whose beautiful smile is like the white kunda flower (mu for mukha, or mouth, and kunda).” (Padma-purāṇa, BRS 1.2.114)

In the twelfth chapter of the Gita, the Lord also says:

*yasmān nodvijate loko lokān nodvijate ca yaḥ
harṣāmarṣa-bhayodvegair mukto yaḥ sa ca me priyah*

“The devotee who is neither disturbed by the world nor causes the world any disturbance, who is free from the pull of euphoria, anger and fear, is most dear to Me.” (Bg 12.15)

*yo na hrṣyati na dveṣṭi na śocati na kāṅkṣati
śubhāśubha-parityāgī bhaktimān yaḥ sa me priyah*

“The devoted person who is free from elation, anger, sorrow and craving, who neither seeks the pleasant nor shuns the unpleasant, is ever dear to Me.” (Gita 12.17)

How can any attachment or hatred for material objects find a place in the heart where attachment to the guru, the eternal associate of Srimati Radharani, has awakened? In such a heart, there is constant awareness of the absolute necessity of attaining the supreme goal of life, loving service to Sri Krishna. This alone is the ultimate purpose of life for every single living entity. Srila Prabhupada himself said: “The ultimate object of our desires is to become specks of dust at the lotus feet of the followers of Rupa Goswami. Remain united in following the āśraya-vigraha in order to satisfy the transcendental senses of the one, non-dual supreme truth . . . May we never under any circumstances become indifferent to the seven-tongued sacrificial flame of the Holy Name. If our attraction to it remains ever-increasing, we will achieve all perfection.” We pray that our

commitment to these last instructions of his manifest presence in this world be unfailing. May we never interpret these words to elicit secondary meanings that allow us to engage in sense gratification, but rather, single-mindedly dedicating all our energies and working together, aim for the pleasure of “the senses of the one, non-dual Supreme Truth,” making it the one and only goal of our lives. If we wish to show our love and faith for our spiritual master, it will be by following these teachings.

However, rather than giving full attention to the desires of the spiritual master, we may focus on serving his body or the extensions of his body represented by temples and ashrams. If we do so, we will never be free of the pitfall of seeing the guru in purely human terms (*martyāsad-dhīḥ*). The Lord can only be seen through the path of transcendental sound (*śrutekṣita-pathah*) and the spiritual master, being his manifest representative, is also perceptible through divine sound vibration.

The words *śrutekṣita-pathah* (SB 3.9.11) are broken down as follows: *śruta* means “through hearing” or “revelation”; *īkṣita* means “seen” or “perceived”; *pathah* means “the way” or “the path.” This compound word thus means, “He to whom the way is perceived through hearing revealed knowledge.” For this reason we offer our respects to the guru with the words:

tat-padaṁ darśitam yena tasmai śrī-gurave namah

“I pay my humble obeisance to the spiritual master who has shown me that supreme truth.”

Srila Visvanath Chakravarti Thakur interprets the words *śrutekṣita-pathah* in a slightly different manner in his *Sārārtha-darśinī* commentary:

ādau guru-mukhāt śrutah paścād īkṣitah sāksāt-kṛtaś ca panthā yasya saḥ | yena pathā tvam hṛt-sarojam āyāto ‘si tam | panthānah sādhana-bhakti-prakārāḥ ta eva suṣṭhu paricinvantīti dhvaniḥ | ato yasya tat-prāptīcchā vartate sa tata eva panthānam paricinotv ity anudhvaniḥ |

“‘O Lord, the way to reach you must first be heard from the guru; then it can be seen and directly realized. You then enter the lotus of our hearts by taking this path.’ The suggestion is that these devotees perfectly recognize the ways and means of the devotional path. The further suggestion is that if we wish to attain the Supreme Lord, then we too must try to gain knowledge of that path.”

Remember the words of the great authority Narottama Thakur:

guru-mukha-padma-vākyā

cittete kariyā aikya āra nā kariha mane āśā

śrī guru caraṇe rati, ei se uttama gati je prasāde pūre sarva āśā

“Fix your mind on the words emanating from the lotus mouth of the spiritual master. Place your hopes in nothing else. Affection for the guru’s lotus feet is the ultimate goal, for by his mercy all of one’s aspirations are realized.” (Narottama Das, Prema-bhakti-candrikā)

From faith in the words of the spiritual master, affection for his service increases. Someone who becomes a powerful preacher or learned writer but makes no effort to put the spiritual master’s words into practice shows no actual love for him. The spiritual master can see through those who only make a show of affection for him and will surely crown with success the sincere attempts of the disciple who genuinely follows his directions. The guru is the personification of Lord Gauranga’s magnanimity, therefore he will mercifully transfer power or strength to his sincere disciple. With his blessings, the blessings of the Lord are not long to follow, for the mercy of the Lord comes through that of His intimate associates.

Yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādaḥ. If we make no effort to seek out the blessings of the spiritual master, we may worship the Lord for millions of lifetimes without His ever becoming satisfied with us. Krishna Himself distributes His mercy to the living beings by taking the form of the spiritual master. For this reason, the Vedic scriptures have clearly stated that there is no means of attaining Krishna’s blessings other than by following the spiritual master.

The Upanishads have stated:

yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā deve tathā gurau

tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ prakāśante mahātmanāḥ

“Only unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master, who is His manifestation and not different from Him, are all the imports of Vedic knowledge automatically revealed.” (Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 6.23)

My most worshipable Gurudeva, Srila Prabhupada, did not see the faults in anyone; he was most compassionate. We who aspire to become the servants of his servants and to partake of the remnants of his plate, pray to him with all the sincerity at our command that by his causeless mercy he will give us the worthiness to serve him. We pray to him to please make our hearts simple and free from deception; may he forgive us of our offenses, and consider us the

servants of his servants, birth after birth. May he free us from the attractions and aversions of this world and keep us fixed in service to his lotus feet.

Raghunath Das lamented the disappearance of Srila Rupa Goswami with such intensity that stones could have melted. In Rupa's absence, he felt the entire land of Vraja to be completely empty: Govardhana was like a great python, Radha Kund the wide open mouth of a tiger, and he felt his own self to be void of life. Can we ordinary mortals imitate the eternal associates of the Lord in their feelings of separation? Narottama Das Thakur also cried and prayed fervently to his diksha guru Lokanath Goswami to attain the lotus feet of Sri Rupa Goswami, who had actualised Sriman Mahaprabhu's heartfelt desires on this earth.

Narottama Das sang that Sri Rupa was the worshipable object of his devotion, the treasure of his life, his jeweled ornament, the very source of his life, the perfection of his desire, the ocean of ecstatic feeling, his Vedic religion, his vow, his penance, his prayer and his duty. Rupa Goswami was everything to Narottama Thakur, and therefore he almost went mad out of his feelings of separation, crying day and night in the hope of receiving his mercy. If we could even feel a millionth part of what he did, our lives would be perfect; we would attain the greatest fortune. I do not know how many more lifetimes I will have to wait for this good fortune to be mine. Devotion to the spiritual master is the only way to reach our Divine Lord.

The spiritual master is the personal companion of Lord Krishna or Sri Gauranga; he is most dear to Him. Krishna Das Kaviraja writes:

*dīkṣā-kāle bhakta kare ātma-samarpaṇa sei-kāle kṛṣṇa tāre kare ātma-sama sei
deha kare tāra cid-ānanda-maya aprākṛta-dehe tāṅra caraṇa bhajaya*

"At the time of initiation, when a devotee surrenders to the spiritual master, Krishna makes him equal to Himself. He transforms the devotee's body into spiritual substance; the devotee then worships the Lord in that spiritualized body." (CC 3.4.192-3)

Krishna accepts us as a part of his own entourage to the extent that we surrender ourselves in body, mind and words to the spiritual master. He takes possession of us, as it were, transforming our bodies and making them spiritual so that we will be able to serve him directly. Krishna once embraced his friend Sudama and said,

*nanv artha-kovidā brahmaṇa varṇāśramavatām iha ye
mayā guruṇā vācā taranty añjo bhavārṇavam*

"O brahmin, of all people within the four orders and castes of Vedic society, are not the real knowers of value those who cross over the material ocean by taking

shelter of My words, as taught by the spiritual master?” (SB 10.80.33)

nāham ijyā-prajātibhyāṁ tapasopaśamena ca

tusyeyam sarva-bhūtātmā guru-śuśrūṣayā yathā

“I, the soul of all beings, am not as pleased by the performance of the prescribed duties of the four ashrams, i.e., sacrifices, service to the family, austerities and renunciation, as I am by service to the guru.” (SB 10.80.34)

When asked how love for God develops, Prahlad Maharaj told the other boys in his school: *guru-śuśrūṣayā bhaktyā sarva-labdhārpanena ca*, “through serving the guru, being devoted to him and by offering him all of one’s gains.” (SB 7.7.30)

Srila Visvanath Chakravarti Thakur comments on this verse as follows:

guroḥ śuśrūṣayā snapana-samvāhanādikayā tathā sarveśāṁ labdhānāṁ vastūnāṁ arpaṇena ca tac cārpaṇāṁ bhaktyaiva, na tu pratiṣṭhādinā hetunā

“Service to the guru means serving him through such things as bathing and massaging him; offering the guru all of one’s gains should be done with devotion and not out of personal motivations, such as the desire for personal prestige, etc.”

In the Bhagavatam, after telling Yudhisthira how to conquer over various character defects, Narada summarizes by saying: *etat sarvam gurau bhaktyā puruṣo hy añjasā jayet* “We can conquer over all these defects by rendering devotional service to the spiritual master.” (SB 7.15.25)

In other words, the only way to conquer over lust, anger, greed, fear, lamentation, bewilderment, pride, envy, the three miseries and the three modes of material nature is by surrendering to the spiritual master. But if a disciple thinks the spiritual master to be nothing more than an ordinary mortal, then all his spiritual practices and worship of the Lord are simply a wasted effort.

yasya sākṣād bhagavati jñāna-dīpa-prade gurau

martyāsad-dhīḥ śrutam tasya sarvam kuñjara-śaucavat

“We should consider the spiritual master to be directly the Supreme Lord because he bestows transcendental knowledge for our enlightenment. Consequently, for one who maintains the material conception that the spiritual master is an ordinary human being, everything is frustrated. His enlightenment and his Vedic studies and knowledge are all like the bathing of an elephant.” (SB 7.15.26)

In the commentary to this verse, Visvanath Chakravarti Thakur writes the following:

*kim ca satyāṁ bhūyasyāṁ api bhaktau, gurau manusya-buddhitve sarvam eva
vyartham bhavatīty āha yasyeti | sākṣād bhagavatīti bhagavad-amśa-buddhir api
gurau na kāryeti bhāvah | yad vā, upāsyē bhagavaty eva sākṣād-vidyamāne
martyāsad-dhīḥ martya iti durbuddhis tasya śrutam bhagavan-mantrādikam
śravaṇamananādikam ca vyartham ity arthaḥ |*

“It is essential to note that even though someone engages in intense practices of devotion to the Lord, it is all useless if he thinks the spiritual master is an ordinary man. This is being pointed out in this verse. The words sākṣād bhagavati clearly indicate that one must think of the guru as the Supreme Lord Himself, and not even as a mere expansion of the Lord. [He, who is the source of all expansions and the object of all devotional service, has become incarnate in the form of a servant to Himself. This is expressed in the words of the Gurvaṣṭaka: *kintu prabhōr yaḥ priya eva tasya* – “his identity with Krishna is due to his being most dear to Him.”]

Alternatively, even if the Lord, the supreme object of worship, is personally present as the spiritual master, if one has the demented intelligence to think of him as an ordinary mortal, then whatever he has heard from him—the mantras received at the time of initiation or instructions on the scripture and devotional practice—cease to have any effect. This is the intention of this verse.”

Narada follows this statement by giving an example in the subsequent verse (7.15.27):

*eṣa vai bhagavān sākṣāt pradhāna-puruṣeśvaraḥ
yogeśvarair vimṛgyāṅghrir loko yaṁ manyate naram*

“The Supreme Person Sri Krishna personally appeared in this world. He is the supreme lord, the master of all the universes, and the master of yoga. His lotus feet are the ultimate goal of all life, yet the people of this world think of Him as an ordinary man.” (SB 7.15.27)

Though people may think of Krishna as an ordinary man, this does not make it an actuality. Similarly, a spiritual master’s parents, children or neighbors may see him as just another person, but a good disciple recognizes him as the visible manifestation of the Supreme Lord Himself.

Therefore, in the following two verses from the Viṣṇu-smṛti quoted in the Hari-

bhakti-vilāsa, we are advised:

*na guror apriyam kuryāt tāditah pīdito 'pi vā
nāvamanyeta tad-vākyam nāpriyam hi samācaret*

“Never do anything unpleasant to your spiritual master, even if you are humiliated and beaten. Never disregard his words, and never act in a way that is displeasing to him.” (HBV 1.99, from Viṣṇu-smṛti)

*ācāryasya priyam kuryāt prāṇair api dhanair
api karmaṇā manasā vācā sa yāti paramām gatim*

“Do things that are pleasing to your spiritual master with your life and your wealth, with your work, your thoughts and your speech, and you will go to the supreme destination.” (HBV 1.100, from Viṣṇu-smṛti)

It is never appropriate to criticize the words or deeds of the spiritual master by saying things like, “My spiritual master should not have said that, or it was improper for him to have done some particular thing.” By doing so, we reveal our mundane concept of the guru and ultimately we become offensive by showing disrespect to him. This is the offense known as *gurv-avajñā*. The orders of the spiritual master are to be obeyed diligently without reserve or delay—*ājñā gurūṇām hy avicāraṇīyā*. If one is incapable of following his orders, then one should fall down at his feet and pray to him with urgency for the strength and ability to do so. If the spiritual master rebukes or condemns the disciple, the disciple should still not attempt to make his case heard, even though it may be painful to listen in silence. If the disciple argues with the spiritual master, it is counted as the offense of disrespecting the guru. The disciple thus becomes unteachable and, due to his independence, falls down into indiscipline and wantonness, inevitably resulting in suffering.

Six kinds of unsatisfactory disciples are described in the scriptures:

*alir bāṇo jyotiṣakah stabdhībhūtaḥ kimekakaḥ preṣita-preṣakaś caiva ṣad ete
sevakādhamāḥ*

“These six are the ‘bee’ (ali), so called because of his fickleness; the bāṇa, who talks back, piercing his master like an arrow; the procrastinator (jyotiṣaka); the servant who is lazy and inactive (stabdhībhūta); the one who refuses to try to do anything on his own (kimekaka), and the one who passes the buck (preṣita-preṣaka).” All such unsatisfactory disciples (sevakādhamas) demonstrate an ignorance of the spiritual master’s divine nature by their lackadaisical attitude to service. They thus end up as offenders to the spiritual master and the Holy

Name. Any disciple who wishes to attain perfection in the spiritual practices given him by his spiritual master must pay careful attention not to offend him in this way.

In the 17th vilāsa of the Hari-bhakti-vilāsa, the two following verses are quoted from the Agastya-samhitā, describing the five-step puraścaraṇa rite that is recommended for a disciple who wishes to attain perfection in the mantra after initiation:

*pūjā traikālikī nityam japas tarpanam eva ca homa brāhmaṇa-bhuktiś ca
puraścaraṇam ucyate guror labdhasya mantrasya prasādena yathāvidhi
pañcāṅgopāsanam siddhyai puraś caitad vidhīyate*

“There are five aspects to the puraścaraṇa observance: pūjā three times a day, morning, noon and evening, constant chanting of japa, oblations of water, daily fire sacrifice and feeding of the brahmins. In order to attain perfection in the mantra that was given at the time of initiation, it is enjoined that the disciple should first perform these five kinds of worship according to the regulations. This is why it is called puraś ('before') caraṇa ('performing').” (HBV 17.11-12)

The discussion of puraścaraṇa is continued in the same chapter of the Hari-bhakti-vilāsa. According to the Āgamas, the puraścaraṇa gives energy or power to the mantra. Just as an embodied being without strength is impotent and useless, so is a mantra that has never been enlivened by the performance of puraścaraṇa. Even if one should chant the mantra or perform other religious rituals for hundreds of years, he will never attain perfection in the chanting without puraścaraṇa. The basic idea behind the puraścaraṇa is to chant a certain, fixed number of mantras. Then one also performs one-tenth that number of oblations into the sacrificial fire, one-tenth of that number of oblations into water, and feeds one-tenth that number of brahmins. There is some difference of opinion about the number of oblations to be offered into water, as some say that it should be one-tenth the number of mantras chanted. Whatever the case, the rules are so stringent that it is extremely difficult for an ordinary person in this Age of Kali to complete such a vow.

And if there is a disruption in the performance and any single part of the rule is not perfectly carried out, then one has to double the number of mantras and all the other parts of the vow. Therefore, the merciful Lord gives the possibility of an alternative.

*athavā devatā-rūpam gurum dhyātvā pratoṣayet tasya cchāyānusārī syād bhakti-
yuktena cetasā guru-mūlam idam sarvam tasmān nityam gurum bhajet
puraścaraṇa-hīno ‘pi mantrī siddhyen na samśayaḥ*

“Alternatively, one should simply satisfy the guru by meditating on him in the form of the deity. He should think of himself as devotedly following the guru like a shadow. One should constantly worship the guru who is the basis of all of one’s spiritual activities. Even if one does not perform the puraścarāṇa, one can attain perfection in chanting the mantra through service to the guru. Of this there can be no doubt.” (HBV 17.241-2)

*yathā siddha-rasa-sparśāt tāmram bhavati kāñcanam
sannidhānād guror eva śiṣyo viṣṇumayo bhavet*

For as it is said, “Just as copper becomes gold through the touch of specially treated mercury, so does a disciple take on the qualities of Vishnu through the association of his guru.” (HBV 17.243)

Sanatan Goswami comments on these verses in the following way:

*kevalaśrī-guru-prasādenaiva puraścarāṇa-siddhiḥ
syād iti prakārāntaram āha athaveti tribhiḥ*

“Perfection of the puraścarāṇa can be achieved simply by achieving the satisfaction of the spiritual master. These three verses have been quoted as evidence in that regard.” Furthermore, it is said that none of the other preliminary purificatory rituals such as puraścarāṇa are needed in order to attain perfection in the eighteen syllable Gopāla-mantra:

*śrīmad-gopāla-mantra ‘yam naiva kiñcid apekṣate
hṛn-mātra-spṛk phalaty eva sprṣṭo hi dahano yathā*

“This divine Gopāla-mantra, however, depends on nothing at all. As soon as it touches the devotee’s heart it brings results, just as fire burns everything that it touches.” (HBV 17.260)

Sanatan Goswami has also commented on this verse as follows:

*te copāyā mantrāntareṣv eva, na tasmin mohanākhyāṣṭādaśākṣara-mantra iti
likhati śrīmad iti | kiñcit saṃskārādikāṁ | kintu hṛnmātram sprśatīti tathā sann
api phalaty eva | tatra drṣṭāntatvenārthāntaram upanyasyati sprṣṭo hīti |
yathākathañcit sparśa-mātreṇa dahano haded eva tacchakters tathātvād iti
bhāvah |*

“Lord Shiva listed seven different ritual procedures (*drāvana*, etc.) needed to perfect the mantra (HBV 1.226), but these are intended for mantras other than the eighteen-syllable Gopāla-mantra, also named mohana. This mantra has

merely to touch the heart of the sadhaka in order to bear fruit. In the verse, another subject is introduced in order as an example: just as fire needs only the slightest contact in order to burn, so too this king of mantras is naturally endowed with full, perfect powers.”

Of course, it should be borne in mind that the mantra does require one to take shelter of a spiritual master and to render him service. In the story of Krishna and His friend Sudama found in the tenth canto, Krishna tells His guru Sandipani Muni:

iyad eva hi sac-chiṣyaiḥ kartavyam guru-niṣkṛtam yad vai viśuddha-bhāvena sarvārthātmārpaṇam gurau

“The principal duty of a sincere disciple is to repay the spiritual master for all that he has been given. This service to the guru should be performed with a pure attitude, giving everything of value that he possesses, including his very self.”
(SB 10.80.41, HBV 2.112)

Sanatan Goswami writes in the Digdarśinī that niṣkṛtam refers to the way one releases oneself from an obligation by doing something or making a gift in payment. In view of one’s debt to the guru, one should give everything that he possess up to and including his very own soul.

We find the following statement in the same chapter of Hari-bhakti-vilāsa:

*gurum ca bhagavad-drṣṭyā parikramya praṇamya ca
dattvoktām dakṣiṇām tasmai sva-śarīram samarpayet*

“Seeing the spiritual master as a manifestation of the Lord Himself, one should circumambulate him and bow to him. He should then give him dakṣiṇā according to the scriptures, offering his very own body.” (HBV 2.111)

Sanatan clarifies that “according to the scriptures, the dakṣiṇā should be given according to one’s capacity, either half, a quarter or a tenth of one’s wealth. The gifts of wealth should be given before initiation for the pleasure of the spiritual master; the sacrifice of the body should come after receiving the mantra.” The fact is that no one can be free of his debt to the spiritual master, even if he gives him everything he owns. A rich householder may make a show of giving opulent gifts, but this is not the real dakṣiṇā, for Krishna says to Uddhava in the Bhagavatam (SB 11.19.39): *dakṣiṇā jñāna-sandeśah*—the real gift to the spiritual master is to teach others what one has received from him. In his commentary to these words, Visvanath Chakravarti Thakur writes the following: “Here the word *jñāna* means that after experiencing the spiritual joy of kirtan, etc., one instructs one’s own friends and relatives about his realizations.

This is the real gift to the spiritual master and not donations of wealth, clothing or whatever (*utsavānte yat kīrtanādi-rasānubhavasya sandeśah sveṣṭa-mitreṣu jñāpanaiva dakṣiṇā na tu dhana-vastrādy-arpaṇam*).” Therefore, instructing one’s acquaintances and others in the knowledge of sambandha, abhidheya and prayojana taught by the spiritual master according to their capacities is the genuine guru-dakṣiṇā. This means that one must first strictly follow the appropriate spiritual practices, seriously engaging in bhajan. Unless one has exemplary behavior, he cannot hope to acquire the qualifications to preach the spiritual master’s message effectively. This means that he will not be able to give the spiritual master the requisite gifts that follow initiation and instruction. The spiritual master is the manifest representation of Gauranga Mahaprabhu’s message.

Mahaprabhu said:

jāre dekha tāre kaha kṛṣṇa-upadeśa āmāra ājñāya guru hañā tāra ei deśa

“Teach everyone you see this message of devotion to Krishna. On my command, become a guru and deliver this land.” (CC 2.7.128)

bhārata-bhūmite haila manusya janma jāra janma sārthaka kari kara para-upakāra

“Whoever has taken a human birth in the land of India should make his life successful and engage in welfare work for others.” (CC 1.9.41)

If we take these instructions seriously and do everything we can to realize them, then we will one day become capable of giving the spiritual master the gift that he desires above all others. The spiritual master will be pleased and transmit unlimited power to the disciple with whom he is pleased.

To the extent that we serve the spiritual master with sincerity and repeat his teachings, through the association with his words, our hearts will cry out with the desire for the good fortune to be associated with him by directly seeing, touching and serving him directly. Only then will we be able to understand the true spirit of separation. We will then know that he is Radharani’s personal associate who, in the form of Nayanamani Manjari has entered Radha and Govinda’s eternal pastimes and is there immersed in the ocean of service to the Divine Couple. When we feel this mood of separation, the desire to dedicate our lives for attaining this service will awaken. “The spiritual master, who has given me the eyes to see the true purpose of life, is my master birth after birth” (cakṣu-dāna dila je, janme janme prabhu se). He is our lord and master lifetime after

lifetime. We pray that he will be merciful and transform us lowly creatures by giving us the strength to put his message into practice and to preach that message, and then when the time of death comes, he will take us back to his lotus feet, making us his own for eternity. Being distanced from the spiritual master is a source of great pain. We pray that Srila Prabhupada will give us a place at his lotus feet even though we are the most unworthy servants of his servants, so that we may be able to render service to the Divine Couple according to his direction and by following his example.

Our only authority to make such an audacious prayer is that we have taken the remnants of his servants' food. We know that we have no right to make such a request of you, but to whom can we turn other than you, our spiritual master? By your grace, everything that would ordinarily be impossible becomes possible in a moment. Though today all our efforts are nothing but a joke, like those of a dwarf who tries to touch the moon, are your blessings not capable of effecting any miracle? Will they not give us a love for chanting the Holy Names without offense? Has Bhaktivinoda Thakur not sung of the power of the Holy Name to give us the realization of our eternal spiritual identity?

*īśat vikaśi punah dekhāya nija-rūpa-guṇa citta hari laya kṛṣṇa pāśa pūrṇa
vikaśita hañā vraje more jāya lañā dekhāya nija svarūpa vilāsa*

"When the Name is even slightly revealed, it shows me my own spiritual form and characteristics. It steals my mind and takes it to Krishna's side. When the Name is fully revealed, it takes me directly to Vraja, where it shows me my personal role in the eternal pastimes." (*Kṛṣṇa-nāma dhare kata bala?*

Śaraṇāgati)

Thus, by the blessing of the spiritual master, we will be able to receive the mercy of the Holy Name and then, all perfections will come through the Holy Name as Mahaprabhu Himself promised: *ihā haite sarva-siddhi haibe sabāra*.

Rupa Goswami feelingly prayed to the Lord in his song, *Deva bhavantam vande*:

*bhaktir udañcati yady api mādhava na tvayi mama tilamātrī parameśvaratā tad
api tavādhika-durghaṭa-ghaṭana-vidhātrī*

"O Madhava, I do not have a sesame seed's worth of devotion for You. Even so, the proof of Your supreme glory is that you can make even the impossible possible [and make me worthy of You]."

And we must not forget that Krishna's mercy follows that of His living manifestation in the world—His representative, the spiritual master:

guru-rūpe kṛṣṇa kṛpā kar-ena bhakta-gaṇe.

For this reason we pray to Srila Prabhupada with the words, *śrī-gaura-karuṇā-sakti-vigrahāya namo’stu te*—“Obeisance to you, the embodiment of Sri Gauranga Mahaprabhu’s compassionate power.” In His teachings to Srila Sanatan Goswami, Mahaprabhu said, *kṛṣṇa jadi kṛpā kare kono bhāgyavāne guru-antaryāmī-rūpe śikhāya āpane* “When Krishna shows His mercy to any fortunate individual, He teaches him from without as the greatly advanced devotee who acts as the spiritual master and from within as the indwelling Supersoul, also known as the caittya-guru.” (See CC 1.1.45-48 and 2.22.47-8)

When Krishna gives His mercy as the caittya-guru, then He gives the kind of firm and pure intelligence through which the devotee gains expertise in bhajan, or sāsaṅga-bhajana. Externally, the mahānta-guru gives initiation in the mantra and instruction in the practice of bhajan to the disciple who takes shelter of him. No one can advance or attain perfection in bhajan without serving the spiritual master with faith (*viśrambhena guroḥ sevā*). The word *viśrambha* means faith, affection and love. It thus refers to the kind of submissive questioning and surrender as well as the affectionate service mentioned in the Bhagavad Gita’s famous verse summarizing the disciple’s dealings with the spiritual master. One who acts in this way quickly becomes worthy of receiving the spiritual master’s blessings and in due time learns in detail about the three categories of divine knowledge, namely sambandha, abhidheya and prayojana. Service to the guru in affection and love is possible both in this world and the next. The spiritual master is always participating in the eternally pure realm and is never under the thrall of birth and death in this world. One should never think of him as an ordinary mortal. By serving his teachings when he is no longer visible to our mundane eyes, we can get a vision of his transcendental form.

Just like the Supreme Lord, the guru knows what is to be known, including all of us, but he is not known to anyone (*sa vetti vedyam na ca tasyāsti vettā*). We cannot know him through our own power; it is only when he mercifully decides to reveal himself to us that we will achieve the great fortune of being able to see him. Therefore, the famous saying, *guru-kṛpā hi kevalam* (“the spiritual master’s blessings are our only salvation”) is appropriate.

My dear spiritual master! I am completely lacking in knowledge. I am the lowliest miscreant, but I strive to be the servant of your servant. Please forgive whatever offenses I may have committed, consciously or unconsciously. Give me shelter at your lotus feet and the right to serve them. You are the best of the followers of Srila Rupa Goswami, so I pray to you in the same way that Srila Narottama Das Thakur did to Rupa Prabhu in his *Prārthanā*:

*śuniyāchi sādhu-mukhe bale sarva-jana śrī-rūpa-kṛpāya mile yugala-carana śrī-rūpera kṛpā jena āmā prati haya se-pada āśraya jāra sei mahāśaya hā hā
prabhupāda kabe saṅge laiyā jābe śrī-rūpera pāda-padme more samarpibe
mano-vāñchā siddhi tabe haṁ pūrṇa tṛṣṇa hethāya caitanya mile sethā rādhā-
kṛṣṇa tumi nā karile dayā ke karibe āra manera vāsanā pūrṇa kara ei bāra e
tina samsāre mora āra keha nāi kṛpā kari nije-pada-tale deha ṭhāñi rādhā-
kṛṣṇa-līlā-guṇa gān rātra-dine e adhama-vāñchā-pūrṇa nahe tuwā bine
dayāmaya prabhu tumi dayā kara more rādhā-kṛṣṇa-carana jena sadā citte
sphure*

“I have heard from the sadhus—indeed, everyone says that you can attain the lotus feet of the Divine Couple through the blessings of Sri Rupa. When will Rupa Goswami’s mercy fall upon me? When will Prabhupada, who has taken shelter of those lotus feet take me with him and offer me up to Srila Rupa Goswami? My heart’s desire will be realized and my thirst quenched. In this world I will meet Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and in the other, Radha and Krishna. Who else but you, Prabhu, will be able to help me in this way? Fulfill my desires this time. In these three worlds, I have nobody else but you. Be merciful and give me a place under your lotus feet. Let me sing the glories of Radha and Krishna’s pastimes, day and night. Without you, this lowly creature’s desires will never be fulfilled. O Master! You alone are compassionate; please be merciful towards me and help me remember Radha and Krishna at every moment.” O Gurudeva, may my mind always repose in the shade of your lotus feet—mama matir āstām tava pada-kamale.

[This article first appeared in Chaitanya Vāṇī, 13.11, (Dec. 1974), pp. 236-45]

His Last Instructions

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur ended his sojourn amongst the mortals of this world on Thursday, January 1, 1936, at 5:30 in the morning. A week prior to his disappearance, on December 23, Prabhupada gave a number of significant instructions to the disciples who came to see him. These were compiled and published in issues 23 and 24 of the 15th volume of the weekly Gauḍīya magazine. These issues were dedicated to the disappearance of Srila Prabhupada. I have tried here to give these instructions in verse form.

sakale parama utsāha sahakāre rūpa raghunātha vāṇī pracāra sabāra

All of you preach the message of Rupa and Raghunath to everyone with great enthusiasm.

rūpānuga-pada-dhuli haite sabāra (jena) carama ākāṅksā citte jāge anibāra

May the ultimate desire to become a speck of dust at the lotus feet of the followers of Sri Rupa remain ever awake in our hearts.

advaya-jñāna-tattva vraje vrajendra-nandana

(mūla)-viṣaya-vigraha sei sarva-sevya-dhana

Vrajendranandan Krishna is the principle of non-dual consciousness. He is the root object of devotion and the treasured object of service for all.

tāṅra aprākṛta indriya tarpaṇa uddeśe āśrayānugatye sabe thāka mile miśe

In order to satisfy the transcendental senses of the one, non-dual supreme truth, remain united in following Radha, the original reservoir of love for Him.

sabāra uddeśya eka śrī-hari-bhajana tāhā sādhībāre sabe karaha jatana

Everyone make the effort to perfect your worship of Sri Hari; make this the only purpose of your lives.

du’ dinera jāni ei anitya-samsāra ihāte mamaṭā tyaji hao māyā-pāra

Remember that this world is temporary and lasts only a day or two. Give up your family attachment and transcend this world of illusion.

kona-rūpe jīvana nirvāha kari cala nitya-tattva kṛṣṇa-bhakti karaha sambala

Maintain your worldly obligations in whatever way you can, but make the eternal principle, devotion to Krishna, the true provision for your voyage through life.

vipad gañjanā śata śata se lāñchanā āsuk tathāpi hari-bhajana cherō nā

Let hundreds of dangers, insults or persecutions come, but despite them, do not give up your worship of Krishna.

sarva-vighna-vināśana prabhu gaura-hari

avaśya śrī-pade sthāna dibena dayā kari

Lord Gaura Hari destroys all obstacles on the path. He will surely be merciful and give you a place at His lotus feet.

*śrī-kṛṣṇa-vimukha heri adhikāṁśa jana śuddha-kṛṣṇa-sevā-kathā nā kare
graḥāṇa hayo nā utsāha-hīna tāhāte kakhana cherō nā jīvātu tava nijera
bhajana*

When you see that most people are indifferent to Sri Krishna and show no interest in the selfless service to Krishna and in talks about Him, don't be discouraged. Most of all, never give up your bhajan, your life and soul.

nija sarvasva kṛṣṇa-kathā śravaṇa-kīrtana chāriyā dāridrya kena karibe varāṇa

Why would you accept the poverty of a life without hearing and chanting about Krishna, your sole wealth?

kṛṣṇa-pāda-padma māga jīvera kalyāṇa acire purābe vāñchā sarva-śaktimān

Beg for Krishna's lotus feet, the ultimate benediction for all living beings. The Lord is all-powerful and will quickly fulfill your desire.

*asamartha nahe kṛṣṇa dhare sarva-bala (kṛṣṇa-)sevakera vāñchā kabhu nā haya
viphalā*

Krishna is not incapable. He is omnipotent and His servants' desires never go in vain.

*trṇāpeksā hīna dīna āpane mānibe taru-sama sahya-guṇa bhūṣita haibe amānī
mānada haye sadā nāma labe śrī-nāma-bhajane sarva-pradhāna jānibe*

Please always chant the name of the Lord, being humbler than a blade of grass and more tolerant than the tree. Give all respect to others and demand none for yourself. Make the worship of the Holy Name the most important aspect of your devotional life.

śrī-caitanya-pravartita saṅkīrtana-yajñā ihāte laiyā dīkṣā bhajibena vijñā

A wise person will worship the Lord after taking initiation in the sacrifice of the Holy Name inaugurated by Sri Krishna Chaitanya and His associates.

sapta-śikha nāma yajñānale ātmāhuti viśeṣe kalite ei śāstrera jukati

Offer yourself up into the seven flames of this sacrificial fire. The scriptures say that this especially is the religious principle in the Age of Kali.

karma-vīra dharma-vīra haye kāja nāi jñāna-yoga-tapa-ādi pathe kaṣṭa pāi

We do not seek to become heroes performing great works or religious deeds. We will become distressed if we take up the paths of knowledge, works or

austerities.

śrī-rūpera pada-dhūli jānaha svarūpa sei se sarvasva tāhe nā hao virūpa

Know that your true identity is to be a speck of dust at the lotus feet of Sri Rupa Prabhu; don't go against this identity, which is your treasure.

Rūpānuga-varya hana śrī-bhaktivinoda se bhaktivinoda-dhārāya bahe śuddha moda

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur is the best of all the followers of Sri Rupa Goswami. The pure joy of devotional service comes in the stream that started with him.

bhakti-rasāmrta-pūrṇa sei pūta dhārā kakhano habe nā ruddha śata-vighna dvārā

That stream is holy and full of the nectarean flavors of devotion. Even a hundred obstacles shall never obstruct it.

se dhārāya haiyā snāta buddhimān jana bhaktivinoda-mano’bhīṣṭa karaha pūraṇa

Intelligent persons who have bathed in the waters of this stream should endeavor to fulfill the heartfelt wishes of Bhaktivinoda Thakur.

bahu yogya kṛtī-vyakti āchaha tomarā hao sabe āguwān esa kari tvarā

Amongst you are many capable and worthy individuals. So all of you come forward and quickly take up this task.

dante ṭṛṇa dhari ei jāci punaḥ punaḥ śrī-rūpa-pada-dhūli jena hai janma janma

Taking grass between my teeth, I pray repeatedly that I may become a speck of dust at Sri Rupa Goswami's lotus feet, birth after birth.

ihā vinā anyākāṅkṣā nahuka hrdaye ei vāñchā sarva-hṛde hauk udaye

Other than this, I pray that no other desire will ever manifest in my or anyone else's heart.

e saṁsāre thākā-kāle āche nānā bādhā tāhe muhyamān kabhu nahibe sarvathā

While living in the world, we encounter many difficulties; but there is no need for us to ever be bewildered by these difficulties.

bādhā mātra dūra karāi nahe prayojana ataḥpara kibā labhya cinte vijñā-jana

We need make no effort to remove any of these obstacles. What is necessary for us, while we are still here, is to learn what is beyond—what will be the nature of our eternal life.

nitya-ātmā āmi mora nitya sei jīvana ekhani hauk tāra tattva-nirdhāraṇa

Let me realize at this very moment the nature of my eternal spiritual identity and my eternal life in the spiritual world.

ākarṣaṇa-vikarṣaṇera vastu āche jata cāhi vā nā cāhi emana kahiba vā kata

There are so many things that attract and repel us. There is no end to the things that we want and don't want.

ei duhuṇ mīmāṁsā sīghra kari matimān nitya-tattva krṣṇa-bhakti karaha sandhāna

We have to resolve exactly what we do or do not want and decide to search out devotional service to Krishna, the eternal truth.

o duwera yuddhe jadi jayī hate cāo

(tabe) aprākṛta nāmākṛṣṭa hale rakṣā pāo

If you wish to conquer over attractions and repulsions then you should remember that by becoming attracted to the transcendental Holy Name, you will be delivered from them.

krṣṇa-sevā rasa-kathā tabe ta bujhibe tuccha saba rasa prati ghrṇā upajibe

Then you will understand the nature of service to Krishna and the taste of His divine topics. Then you will feel nothing but disgust for the other insignificant pleasures of this world.

krṣṇānuśīlana jata vardhita haibe (jara) viṣaya-pipāsā tata kamite thākibe

As you increase cultivating your consciousness of Krishna, your thirst for material sense objects will decrease.

bara-i kaṭhina tattva krṣṇa-kathā haya āpāta camaka-prada jaṭilārtha-maya

The philosophy of Krishna consciousness is very perplexing. At first it seems startling and full of complex details.

nāmī hate tāñra nāma adhika karuṇa āśraya laile tattva karena jñāpana

The Holy Name is more compassionate than the Lord of the Name Himself. If

one takes shelter of the Name, then it unravels all these philosophical complexities.

nitya-prayojana modera kṛṣṇa-prema-dhana

tāhā anubhave kāma bādhe sarva-kṣaṇa

The treasure of love for Krishna is the eternal goal of our lives. At every moment, personal desires interfere with our realizing it.

nāmāśraye sei bādhā haya apanīta kṛṣṇa-prema-rājye vāsa haya abhīpsita

By taking shelter of the Holy Name, all these obstacles are removed and we can obtain the fulfillment of our true desire, to dwell in the realm of pure love of Krishna.

e jagate keha nahe anurāga-pātra athavā virāga-pātra nahe anumātra

In this world no one is the special object of my affection, nor do I have the slightest hostility toward anyone.

sakala vyavasthā ethā kṣaṇa-sthāyī haya ethā-kāra lābhālābha vicārārha naya

Whatever arrangements we make here in this world are momentary. There is no need to waste time thinking about gain or loss here.

sabākāra labhya sei eka prayojana śrī-kṛṣṇa-padāravinde prema mahādhana

The only thing anyone should strive for is the one supreme goal of life. That is the great treasure of love for Krishna's lotus feet.

tad-uddeśya sabe mili hao yatnavān

eka-dhyāna eka-jñāna hao eka-tāna

So, join together all of you and strive for this goal. Work together harmoniously, with a single thing in mind and a single understanding.

ekoddeśya aikatāne avasthita hao mūlāśraya-vigraha-sevāya adhikāra lao

Working together with the same purpose, you will become qualified for the service of Radharani, the original reservoir of love for Krishna.

rūpānuga-cintā-srota hok pravāhita tā hate svātantrya kabhu nahe samīhita

May the stream of ideas promoted by Rupa Goswami and his followers ever flow. We must never try to be independent of his doctrine.

sapta-jihva nāma-saṅkīrtana-yajña prati kakhano virāga jena nā haya arati

May we never become indifferent or disinterested in the sacrifice of the Holy Name with its fire of seven flames.

ekāntānurāga tāhe thāke vardhamāna tabe ta sarvārtha-siddhi pūrṇa manaskāma

In the performance of sankirtan, if your single-minded devotion goes on increasing, then all your desires will be fulfilled and all your goals achieved.

śrī-rūpānuga janera pāda-padma dhara ekānta bhāvete tāñdera ānugatya kara

Take hold of the feet of the followers of Sri Rupa Goswami and follow them with exclusive commitment.

(śrī)-rūpa-raghunātha-kathā parama-utsāhe nirbhaye pracāra kara sarva-siddhi jāhe

Preach the message of Sri Rupa and Raghunath fearlessly and with great enthusiasm. Through this preaching, you will attain all perfection.

[This article first appeared in Chaitanya Vāṇī, 7.12 (Jan. 1968)]

Remembering His Lotus Feet

A song of separation to Prabhupada's lotus feet

[Chaitanya Vāṇī 7.11, (Dec. 1966)]

1

sudīrgha trimśad-varṣa haila atīta

śrī-guru-caraṇa-sevā hainu vañcita /

tathāpi kena vā dhari e chāra parāṇa

e adhanya dina kena nahe avasāna

Thirty long years have now gone by since I was deprived of service to my spiritual master's lotus feet. I am still alive, but I do not know why I have not given up living when my life has become so meaningless.

2

*āmāra kalyāṇa lāgi prabhu kata dina
śunālena kata kathā haye snehādīna /
akṛtajñā narādhama hāya ki kathina
hṛdaya āmāra tāhe hainu udāsīna*

How often my master would spend time talking affectionately to me about Krishna! Even so, I am still so ungrateful and my heart so hard that I remain indifferent to all his teachings.

3

*āvirbhāva tirobhāva mātra du'ṭi dina
satīrtha-sabhāya hai vacane pravīṇa /
bhāṣāya tānhāra prati jānāi viraha
antare svendriya-prīti-vāñchā aharahaḥ*

Only on the days of his appearance and disappearance do I make great speeches in gatherings of my own godbrothers. In my words I speak of feelings of separation, but my day-to-day life is ruled by the desire for my own sense pleasure.

4

*śrī-guru-mahimā-saha jathā sumilana
sutīvra viraha tathā haya uddīpana /*

*(kintu) ubhayatra seva-buddhi rahe sujāgrata
varam virahe sevāra vṛddhi dvi-guṇita*

I feel my separation so intensely when we join together to glorify our spiritual master. Though we may desire to serve the spiritual master both in this world and the next, the intensity of this desire doubles when we are in separation from him.

5

*śrī-guru-gaurāṅga mano’bhīṣṭa sthāpibāre
śiṣyera hrdaye ārti jāge tīvrākāre /
bhāṣaṇe lekhanī-mukhe tāhāi prakāśi
kārye han tat-para ālasya vināśi*

Separation calls into the disciple's heart a deep anxiety to fulfill the desires of Sri Guru and Gauranga. As I speak about this in my speeches and writings, I become inspired to overcome my lethargy and dedicate myself to that purpose.

6

*(prabhupāda) sutīvra vairāgya cāturmāsyā vratācari
śata-koṭi mahāmantra japa pūrṇa kari /
ācāra pracārādarśa ki mahā ujjvala
sthāpilena prabhu mora bhulinu sakala*

Srila Prabhupada performed the Chaturmasya vows with intense renunciation and completed his vow to chant a billion Names of japa. His example of preaching and practicing was brilliant, yet I have forgotten it all.

7

*aprakaṭa-kāle saba śiṣya sambodhiyā
kahe prabhu kata āṅkhi nīrete bhāsiyā /*

*prabhu antardhāna saṅge saṅge sei saba
bhulinu sakali hāya se vāṇī vaibhava*

At the time of his disappearance, my Prabhu called all his disciples together and spoke to them with tears flowing from his eyes. As soon as he disappeared, however, I became blind to the powerful teachings he gave us on that occasion.

8

*śrī-guru-gaurāṅga-candra virahe kātara
bhaktera ki bhāve kāṭe dina nirantara /
prabhu-nāma-guṇa-līlā-śravāṇa-kīrtane
avirāma jala-dhārā bahe du'nayane*

How do the devotees manage to survive when overwhelmed by separation from Guru and Gauranga? While singing and hearing their names, qualities and pastimes, tears run ceaselessly down their cheeks.

9

*tāñra dīkṣā-śikṣā-sāra kariyā cayana
parama jatane tāhā karena pālana /
bhakti anukūla jāhā karena grahaṇa
bhakti pratikūla bhāva dena visarjana*

They reflect upon all Srimad-Bhagavatam's philosophical teachings and instructions about devotional practice and take great care to follow them. They accept whatever is favorable to devotional service and reject all that is unfavorable.

10

*anya abhilāṣa āra karma-yoga-jñāna
avimiśra ānukūlye kṛṣṇānuśīlana haya /*

*bhakty-uttama ei prabhu-śiksā-sāra
anurāgi bhakta-jana ihā kaṇṭha-hāra*

They give up all other desires and the practices of karma, yoga or jnana. They engage in unmixed devotion, culturing consciousness of Krishna with a favorable attitude. This is the topmost bhakti, the essence of our Lord's teaching. The truly loving devotees cultivate this conception, placing it like a garland around their necks.

11

*prabhura anuśāsana kichu nā māninu tāñra
śiṣya kule hāya kulāṅgāra hainu /
śrī-guru-caraṇe nāhi dṛḍha śraddhā-bhakti
mukhete dekhāi śudhu guru anurakti*

I have not accepted any of Srila Prabhupada's discipline; I have become a black sheep amongst his disciples. Having no faith and devotion for my spiritual master, I simply make a show of attachment to him.

12

*prabhupāda aprakaṭa līlā pūrva-dine
śrī-caraṇe sevā-kāle kātara parāṇe /
o duṭi rājīva-pade bakṣe dhare tuli
kendechinu tava cira dāsa kara bali*

On the day before Srila Prabhupada's disappearance from this world, I was engaged in his service with a tormented heart. I held his two lotus feet on my chest and cried, "Make me your eternal servant!"

13

śrī aṅga samādhi kāle śrī dhāma-māyāpure

*āro kata kāndilām bhāsi āṅkhi nīre /
bhāṣāṇe likhena kata karinu vilāpa
sakali ki habe tāhā unmāda pralāpa*

How much more I cried while his body was being placed in samadhi in Sri Mayapur Dham. Since then I have written and spoken so many things in my desperation, but what good will come of all this mad ranting?

14

*uṭhibe nā prāṇa keṇde prabhu-sevā-tare
ekhano ki acetana raba moha ghore /
avicāre guru-ājñā karite pālana
habe nā ki citta dṛḍha yatna prāṇa-paṇa*

My spirit does not rise up and cry out for service to his feet. How much longer will I unconsciously remain in this state of deep bewilderment? Will my mind never be firm and commit fully to following my spiritual master's commands without question?

15

*tuccha svārtha siddhi hāni cintā uṭhi mane
vañcibe ki guru sevā mahā mūlyā dhane /
prabhu mukha niḥsarita amṛtera vāṇī
śunile niḥsēṣe dūra haya saba glāni*

Will absorption in my insignificant personal goals always cheat me of the most valuable treasure of service to my spiritual master? If I had truly listened to his ambrosial messages, I would be free of this lamentation.

16

divya cakṣu jñāna dātā janme janme

*prabhu sutarāṁ tac-chiṣya-gane bheda /
nāhi kabhu bhāye bhāye bheda-bhāva kariyā
vidūra sabe mile miše sevā kariba prabhura*

The holy preceptor who has opened my eyes with divine knowledge is my lord, birth after birth. Therefore, no one should make a distinction between him and his disciples. We will serve our spiritual master as brothers, eliminating the differences that exist between us.

17

*jīva-hita jāgi prabhu kariyā jatana
śrī-caitanya-mano’bhīṣṭa karilā sthāpana /
grantha-patrikādi dvāre śrī-bhakti-siddhānta
pracāri nāśilā saba kurāddhāsta-dhvānta*

Srila Prabhupada worked for the benefit of all living beings and this is why he established the mission of Lord Chaitanya on this earth. He preached the message of pure devotion through books and periodicals, destroying the darkness of ignorance everywhere.

18

*gaura-nāma gaura-dhāma gaura-mukha-vāṇī
sarvatra pracāra kailā nyāsī-śiromāṇi /
bhāgavata-pradarśinī ādi kata bhāve
śuddha-bhakti pracārite yatna kailā bhāve*

As the best of the sannyasis, Srila Prabhupada preached the name of Gaura, the abode of Gaura and the message of Gaura everywhere that he went. He also established exhibitions based on the Bhagavata as a way of preaching pure devotional service.

19

*sola vā caurāśi-krośa gaura-kṛṣṇa-dhāma
parikrami sarva-dhāme gāhilena nāma /
pañca mukhya bhakti aṅga karite yajana
apūrva suyoga sabe kailā vitaraṇa*

He sang the names of the Lord everywhere throughout the Dham while performing the 84-kros parikrama in Vraja and the 16-kros parikrama in Nabadwip. In so doing, he gave everyone the opportunity to practice the five main devotional activities all at once.

20

*prācyo o pāścātya-deśe śikṣita-samāje
sa-gaurave gaura-gāthā āji je virāje /
prabhura pracāra-ceṣṭā āche tāra mūle
tāi viśva-vāsī jaya jaya gaura bale*

The prestige that the teachings of Gauranga Mahaprabhu have in the learned communities of both the East and the West has its basis in Prabhupada's preaching effort; now everywhere in the world, people sing "Jaya Jaya Gaura!"

21

*śrī-māyāpure ākara caitanya-maṭha-rāja
tāra sākhā gauḍīya-maṭha khyāta viśva-mājha /
sarvatra sthāpiyā viśve śrī-maṭha-mandira
uṛāla vijaya-dhvajā śrī-śuddha-bhaktira*

Prabhupada established the great maṭha in Mayapur named Chaitanya Math, and branch maṭhas far and wide. In all these temples and monasteries, he raised the victory banner of pure devotional service to Krishna.

22

*sei śuddha-bhakti-pūta vaiṣṇava-ācāra
āpani ācari prabhu karilā pracāra /
mūla grantha ṭīkā bhāṣāṇa prabandhādi dvārā
karilā pracāra śrī-bhaktivinoda-dhārā*

Prabhupada demonstrated the ideal Vaishnava behavior and at the same time preached the conception of service established by Bhaktivinoda Thakur through publishing the Goswamis books and commentaries, while himself explaining them through his own commentaries and articles.

23

*śrī-bhakti-dayita-mādhava tāñra priyatama
tāñra ānugatye sthāpiyāche maṭhottama /
pavitra śrī-māyāpura-dhāme śrī-īśodyāne
mūla śrī-caitanya-gauḍīya-maṭha śubhākhyāne*

His dearmost disciple Bhakti Dayita Madhava Maharaj followed in his footsteps and established a beautiful temple and monastery in Sri Mayapur Ishodyan, naming it the headquarters of the Sri Chaitanya Gaudiya Math.

24

*mukhya śākhā tāra haya dakṣiṇa kalikātā
tāhāo śrī-caitanya-gauḍīya-maṭha nāme /
khyātā śrī-vṛndāvana hāyadarābāda āsāma
prabhṛti sthāneo śākhā āche nirupama*

He subsequently established the main branch of the Chaitanya Gaudiya Math in South Calcutta and then further branches in Vrindavan, Hyderabad, Assam and other parts of India.

25

*śrī-caitanya-vāṇī nāmnī patrikā pradhāna
prabhu mukha śruta vāṇī tāhātei gāna /
pāṭha vakṛtādi dvāre karena pracāra
āsamudra himācala tāhāra prasāra*

He published a monthly magazine named Chaitanya Vāṇī, in which the divine words put forth by Srila Prabhupada were given pride of place. Madhava Goswami Maharaj gave lectures and classes throughout India, from the Indian Ocean in the south to the Himalayas in the north, spreading Srila Prabhupada's teachings everywhere.

26

*kṛpā kara prabho modera tomāra caraṇe
ahaitukī bhakti jena thāke anukṣaṇe /
tava dīkṣā śikṣā anusāriyā satata
gāhiba tomāra gāna haye anugata*

O Prabhupada! Please be merciful to us that we may always have unmotivated devotion to your lotus feet. May we always act in accordance with your initiation and your teaching and may we always glorify you as your disciples.

27

*sapārṣade gaurahari hale antardhāna
gauḍīya gagane jabe chāila ajñāna /
śrī-gaura-karuṇā-sakti prabhupāda mora
āsilena vināśite kali-tamo ghora*

Once Gaura Hari had disappeared along with His associates, the shadow of ignorance fell over the sky of Gauda (Bengal). Srila Prabhupada was the incarnation of Lord Gauranga's mercy-power and descended in order to destroy this terrible darkness of Kali.

28

*śrī vārṣabhaṇavī dayita dāsa dhari nāma
śrī bhaktisiddhānta sarasvatī guṇa-dhāma /
śrī rādhā nayanamāṇi kṛṣṇa-priyatama
kṛṣṇa-kārya sādhībāre tāñra āgamana*

The abode of virtue, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati, was also known as Sri Varshabhanavi-dayita Das (“servant of the lover of Vrishabhanu’s daughter”). Most dear to Krishna, the cynosure of Radha’s eyes, he is Sri Nayanamani Manjari. He appeared in this world to execute the will of Sri Krishna.

29

*bāra-śata-āśi māghī śrī-kṛṣṇā-pañcamī
tāhe sarva-śubha lagna kāla avalambi /
udaya hailā prabhu nīlācale dhāme
śrī jagannātha mandirera ati sannidhāne*

My Prabhu appeared in Nilachala Dham, near the temple of Lord Jagannath, in the Bengali year 1280, at an auspicious moment on the fifth day of the waning moon in the month of Magh.

30

*gaurapriya mahājana śrī-bhaktivinoda
ṭhākurera sutarūpe bāṛālena moda /
bhakta-grhe bhakti-pariveśa-madhye janma
śunite śunite nāma aho dhanya dhanya*

Appearing as the son of Bhaktivinoda Thakur, Srila Prabhupada brought great joy to that authority and devotee dear to Gauranga Mahaprabhu. He was born in the house of a devotee in an atmosphere of devotion, in the midst of the chanting of the Holy Name. How glorious a birth it was!

31

*jagannātha prasādānna śrī-anna-prāśana
śrī-viṣṇu-prasāda-anna-grahaṇa ājīvana /
āśaiśava kṛṣṇa-kathā śravaṇa-kīrtana
ākumāra brahmacarya vrata samṛakṣaṇa*

The first solid food he ate was Jagannath's prasad, and throughout his life he never ate anything but Vishnu prasad. From childhood, he always heard and discussed topics related to Krishna. Throughout his life, he observed the vow of celibacy.

32

*mahā-puruṣocita dvātrimśal-lakṣaṇa
prabhura śrī-aṅge chila se saba bhūṣaṇa /
atisukomala kara-caraṇa-kamala
śiśuvat svalpāhārī mukhaśrī ujjvala*

My Prabhu's body was ornamented with the thirty-two characteristics of a great personality. His hands and feet were so soft, like the skin of a baby. He ate little and his face was effulgent with purity.

33

*kṛṣṇa-nāma kṛṣṇa-kathā satata vadane
atyadbhuta anurāga śrī-kṛṣṇa-kīrtane /
pāṣaṇḍa-dalana āra prema pracāraṇe
analasa prabhu sadā bāhya vismarane*

He never used his tongue for anything other than chanting Krishna's name and talking about Him. His attachment for Krishna kirtan was unbelievable. He tirelessly preached the message of love divine and defeated atheistic views,

rising above all material conceptions of self.

34

*bhakti-anukūla pratikūla grahaṇe varjane
puṣpa-vajra-tulya hatena komala kaṭhine /
lokāpeksā-sūnya prabhu sad-dharma-rakṣaṇe
nirasta-kuhaka satya nirbhīka kīrtane*

When accepting that which favored devotional service or rejecting that which was unfavorable to it, he was either as soft as a flower or hard as a thunderbolt. He was beyond consideration of public opinion; he was free of illusion and fearlessly performed Hari kirtan.

35

*adhikāra ullaṅghiyā jara-kāmāture
rāsādika-līlā-kathā kabhu nāhi sphure /
tāi sarvathā niṣedhe prabhu anadhikārīre
laha nāmāśraya yadi cāha adhikāre*

Prabhu always condemned those who listened or chanted Radha and Krishna's Rasa-lila and other esoteric pastimes without the proper qualifications and while still under the influence of material sex desire. He would always tell such unqualified people to take shelter of the Holy Name and to pray for the worthiness to advance to the appropriate level.

36

*mudrā-yantra sthāpi bhakti-granthera pracāre
bara-i ullāsa prabhura āchila antare /
nāma-haṭṭa pracārite kata nā utsāha
nāma bhaja nāma cinta ukti aharahaḥ*

Prabhupada established printing presses for publishing devotional literature; this gave him great joy. He had boundless enthusiasm for preaching the Nama Hatta. Day and night he told everyone to chant and meditate on the Holy Name.

37

*emana dayālu prabhu kebā kothā pāya
bhāgya-hīna tāi tānre hārāinu hāya /
kintu e bāra bharasā citte dhari nirantara
janme janme hai jena tānhāra kiñkara*

Where else could we find anyone as compassionate as my Prabhu? Alas, I am so unfortunate that I have lost his association. Still, I constantly harbor a great hope in my heart that I may be his servant, birth after birth.

38

*terā-śata tetālliśa kṛṣṇā caturthī tithite
niśānta līlāya prabhu praveśe prabhāte /
śrī-rādhā-mādhava jabe gāṛha samāśleṣa
śrī-gaura-līlāra jāhe karena uddeśa*

On the fourth day of the waning moon in the month of Magh in the Bengali year 1342, Prabhu entered Sri Radha-Madhava's early morning pastimes, when They are tightly wound in embrace—the very pastime that gives an indication of Lord Gauranga's incarnation.

39

*prabhu-aprakāśe mora hṛdaya gagana
eki hala hāya andha-tamete magana /
kothā gela sukha śānti hāsi mākhā mukha
sadā hā hatāśa kari duḥkha bharā buka*

When Srila Prabhupada disappeared I felt that my heart had become clouded over with an absolute darkness. I felt as though I had lost all happiness, all peace, as I could no longer see his smiling face. My chest was heavy with sadness and I sighed constantly in hopelessness.

40

*japa-dhyāna kari baṭe mane śānti nāi
ki jena hārāye gechi khunje nāhi pāi /
e adhama bara duḥkhī prabhu kṛpā kara
śrī-nāma-bhajane rati dāo he satvara*

Of course I go on chanting japa and practicing my meditation, but I feel no peace of mind. It is as though I have lost something and cannot find it, though I keep on looking. Prabhu! I am so fallen and disheartened—please quickly give me attraction for chanting the Holy Name.

41

*dharechinu jei duṭi pada bakṣe tuli
cirāśraya deha tāhe jena kabhu nāhi /
bhuli kariyāchi kata amārjanīya doṣa
oi padatale adoṣa-daraśī prabho kṣama saba bhule*

Give me eternal shelter under those same lotus feet that I once held on my chest. May I never forget them. How many unpardonable offenses have I committed to those lotus feet. Dear Prabhu, please do not take offense and forgive and forget them all.

42

*agatira gati tumi anya gati nāi
tava kṛpā vinā kṛṣṇa-kṛpā nāhi pāi /
daṇḍa diyā samśodhiyā rākha he caranē*

keha nā rakṣite pāre o caraṇa bine

You are the only shelter of the hopeless and I have no other resort but you. Without your mercy I cannot get the blessings of Krishna. Punish me if you must, but correct my flaws and make me worthy of your lotus feet. No one can protect me other than you.

43

*ananta-śrī-vibhūṣita o rāṅgā caraṇe
pranami saṣṭāṅge kṛpā kara abhājane /
patita-pāvana prabho patite uddhāra
tava dāsa-dāsa kari dāo sevā-adhikāra*

Your lotus feet are decorated with infinite opulences. I prostrate myself before them and ask for your mercy, though I am most unworthy. O Lord, you are the savior of the most fallen, save me, make me the servant of your servant and give me the qualification to serve you.

44

*kothā pābo kṛṣṇa-sevā tumi nāhi dile
yugala-sevā-adhikāra tava kṛpāya mile /
śrī-rūpera kṛpāleśa tumi dite pāra
rāgānugā bhaktye tabe pāba adhikāra*

Where will I find service to Krishna if you do not give it to me? By your mercy, it is possible to become worthy for the service of the Divine Couple. You can pass on the blessings of Rupa Goswami and the qualifications to worship on the rāgānugā path.

45

*vidhi-bhaktye vraja-bhāva kabhu nāhi pāi
se bhaktio tava kṛpā vinā hate nāi /*

*tāi dante ṭrṇa dhari oi rāṅgā pāya
parinu sāṣṭāṅge kṛpā kara amāyāya*

No one can attain the mood of the residents of Vraja by the formal practice of vidhi-bhakti. Even so, without your mercy, we could not even maintain such practice of devotion. So I place straw between my teeth and I fall down at your rose-colored feet and ask you to be merciful toward me.

46

*mohana pāmara prati hao he sadaya
adhamera sarva-doṣa kṣama dayāmaya /
caitanya-guru rūpe vasi hṛdayera mājhe
dāo śuddha-buddhi more tava sevā-kāje*

I am so deeply illusioned, so be compassionate towards me. O merciful one, please forgive all the faults that I have committed. Take up residence in my heart as the Caitanya-guru and give me the pure intelligence by which I can serve you.

47

*mahānta-svarūpe sadā rakṣa he āmāya
tava sevā chāṛi mana kāhān nāhi jāya /
tava nija-jana-saṅge kṛṣṇa-kathā gāne
kāṭe jena niśi-dina ei āśā prāṇe*

Come in the form of advanced devotees to protect me so that my mind never abandons your service. May I always remain in the company of those who were close to you, engaged in talking about Krishna and singing His glories. I pray with all my heart that my entire life passes in this way.

48

śiṣyera malina mukha dekhile kakhana

*haite vyathita citta viṣṇuṇa vadana /
śunāite kṛṣṇa-kathā kata sneha bhare
ghucita sakala vyathā śiṣyera antare*

Sometimes when you saw your disciples looking pained or depressed and sadfaced, you would affectionately speak to them Krishna-kathā and rid them of all their distress.

49

*āra ke śunābe kṛṣṇa-kathā āpanā pāśari
ke muchābe āṅkhi-jala eta sneha kari /
bhāgya-hīna tāi morā vañcita hainu
emana sneha-maya pitā sevite nārinu*

Who is there now who will forget himself while speaking about Krishna? Who will affectionately wipe the tears from our eyes? We are so unfortunate and have been cheated that we have not been able to serve a father who is so affectionate to us.

50

*prabho kata doṣa kariyāchi tomāra caraṇe
adoṣa-daraśī tumi sa-sneha bhartsane /
śodhiyācha kṛṣṇa-kathā kariyā kīrtana
aphuranta sneha tava ke kare varṇana*

O my lord! Whenever I committed faults to you personally, you would correct me by affectionately chastising me and purify me by talking about Krishna. Who can describe your inexhaustible love?

With Tears of Separation

A poem written on the occasion of Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur's thirty-first disappearance day (1968).

[From Chaitanya Vāṇī 8.11, (Dec. 1968), pp. 252-255]

1

*ahaitukī kṛpā tava nāhi pārāvāra
mo hena pāmara janeo karecho svīkāra*

There is no limit to your causeless mercy, for you have accepted even a fallen person such as myself.

2

*bārekera tare jadi dilā adhikāra
hṛdaye dharite pada-kamala tomāra /
vimukha dekhiyā ebe karo nā vañcita
śrī-carana-sevā-dāne purāo vāñchita*

Since you once gave me the right to hold your lotus feet over my chest, do not now take me for one who is indifferent and deprive me of such contact. Fulfill my desires by giving me service to your lotus feet.

3

*aprakaṭa kāle-o tumi nitya prakaṭita
mādrśa jīvera sadā cāhitechā hita /
kariyāchi karitechā kata je anyāya
tathāpi ekhano kṛpā kara amāyāya*

Although you may have disappeared from view, you are eternally present, for you constantly seek the welfare of living entities like myself. Though I have committed so many sins in the past and even now I continue to do so, please do not withhold your mercy from me.

4

*patita durgata jīve śodhibāre tare
kahiyācha harikathā kata nā ādare /
bahirmukha jīve dekhi tritāpe tāpita
bhāsiyācha āṅkhi-nīre haiyā vyathita*

You affectionately recounted Hari-kathā to so many fallen, miserable, wretched, afflicted souls for their purification. Whenever you saw the jivas suffering the threefold miseries of material life, you were swept by tears from the pain.

5

*cintiyācha kise jīva pāibe uddhāra
krṣṇa prema dhana kise lābha habe tāra /
krṣṇa-nāma vinā tāra dekhi nāhi gati
śikhāo jīvere nāme kara śīghra rati*

You wondered how these conditioned souls could be delivered and how they could one day attain the great treasure of divine love. Without chanting Krishna's name, no one can make spiritual progress, so you advised all jivas to immediately develop a taste for such chanting.

6

*prati jīva dvāre jāi cāha ei bhikṣā
bala krṣṇa bhaja krṣṇa kara krṣṇa śikṣā /
śrī-gaura-karuṇā-śakti vigraha dhariyā*

tava rūpe avatīrṇa śrī-kṣetre āsiyā

You knocked at every door and begged everyone to talk about Krishna, to worship Krishna and to learn about Krishna from the scriptures. Indeed, it was Lord Gauranga's own mercy-energy that took your form and appeared in Sri Kshetra Dham.

7

*tāi eta dayā tava dekhi anivāra
patite-o ghrṇā-leśa nāhika tomāra /
krame tathā hate āsi māyāpura-dhāme
sthāpilā śrī-caitanya-maṭha gaura-sevā kāme*

This is why we see you have unlimited mercy. You have not even the slightest abhorrence for the sinful. Eventually you left Puri for Sri Dham Mayapur where you established Sri Chaitanya Math out of a desire to serve Gauranga Mahaprabhu.

8

*śrī-gaurāṅga-janma-sthāna ei māyāpura
prakaṭilā tāhā bhaktivinoda ṭhākura /
vaiṣṇava-sārvabhauma śrī-jagannātha-dāsa
karilena samarthana kariyā ullāsa*

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur revealed Gauranga's birthplace in this holy land of Mayapur. The emperor of the Vaishnava world, Jagannath Das Babaji, showed great delight and confirmed Bhaktivinoda Thakur's discovery.

9

*śrī-gaura-kiśora-dāsa āra vamśī-dāsa
sabe mili jaya gāhi purālena āśa /*

*śrī-bhaktivinoda-ceṣṭāya ati alpa-dine
iṣṭaka mandira eka haila nirmāṇe*

Not only he, but other great saints like Sri Gaura Kishor Das Babaji and Vamsi Das Babaji Maharaj also gave their approval and this gave great satisfaction to Bhaktivinoda Thakur. With Bhaktivinoda Thakur's efforts, a brick temple was built on the birthsite a short time later.

10

*terā-śata baṅga abde phālgunī pūrṇimāya
udilā tathāya viṣṇu-priyā gaura rāya /
śrī-rādhā-mādhava āsilena vraja hate
brāhmaṇa pūjārī sevā kailā bhāla mate*

Then on the full moon day of the month of Phalgun in the Bengali year 1300, deities of Srimati Vishnupriya and Lord Gauranga were consecrated. Later, deities of Sri Sri Radha-Madhava were brought from Vraja and installed by Their sides and brahmin pujaris were engaged to properly worship Them.

11

*śrī-mandira-samakṣe eka bṛhat āṭa-cālā
tat-paścimete eka panasa-vṛkṣa chilā /
bāra-māsa phalita tāhe ati miṣṭa
phala śrī-gaura-mādhava-bhoge lāgita sakala*

Just beside the temple a large thatch-roofed building was built, to the west of which stood a jackfruit tree. This amazing tree gave sweet fruit twelve months of the year and these fruit were offered to Their Lordships Radha-Madhava and Gaura-Vishnupriya.

12

parama-guru śrī-gaura-kiśora (sahara) navadvīpa hate

*āsiyā basitena sei panasa-talete /
acchedya tulasi-vana yoga-pīṭhe raya
āmra-bilva-panasādi vṛkṣa-śobhā pāya*

Our param guru, Gaura Kishor Das Babaji Maharaj, would often come from Nabadwip and sit under this jackfruit tree. There was a tulasi garden on the site of the Yoga Pith that could not be removed. The site was also beautified with mango, wood apple and jackfruit trees.

13

*sugandhi puṣpera kuñje sthāne sthāne śobhe
sugandhe pūrita vāyu bhakta-mano-lobhe /
śrī-bābājī bhajanānande hatena nimagana
dhāmera cinmaya saundarye tāñra mugdha hata mana*

Fragrant flower bushes were scattered in various places all over the site, filling it with a scent that delighted the minds of all the devotees. Srila Gaura Kishor Das Babaji would sit under the tree, joyfully absorbed in chanting the Holy Names, contemplating the transcendental beauty of the Holy Land.

14

*kichu dine gaura-priyatama prabhupāda eka
nava-mandira prakāśite karilena sādha /
śrī-bābājī mahāśaya basitena jathā
bhajitena prāṇa-priya gaurāṅga sarvathā*

Not long afterward, Lord Gauranga's dearest associate Prabhupada began to desire to build a new temple in the place where Babaji Mahasaya used to sit and wholeheartedly worship the lord of his life, Sri Gauranga.

15

*se-sthāne mandira bhitti khanana karite
jānālena abhiprāya bhakta-vṛnda-sādhe /
prabhu-mano'bhiṣṭa jāni harṣe bhakta-gaṇa
avilambe sevā-kārye kailā ārambhaṇa*

You told of your intention to dig the foundations of the temple in that spot for the pleasure of the devotees. When the devotees learned of Prabhupada's desire, they enthusiastically began to take up the service without delay.

16

*śrī-sakhī-caraṇa bhakti-vijaya takhani
artha-ānukūlya-dāne halena agrāṇī /
śubha-dine śubha-kṣaṇe bhitti-khanana-kāle
bhakti-vṛnda pāilā eka mūrti bhitti-tale*

Sri Sakhi Charan Das Bhakti Vijaya donated money for its construction. The digging of the foundations was begun at an auspicious moment on an auspicious day. On the outset of the work, the devotees found an ancient Vishnu deity at the bottom of the hole.

17

*savismaye lai tāhā gaura-kumbha-jale
abhiṣeka karilena bāra kutūhale /
jaya-gāne yoga-pīṭha kari mukharita
prabhupāda pāśa gelā haiyā tvarita*

Everyone was quite astonished and they ecstatically performed a ritual abhiṣeka of the deity. The entire Yoga Pith rang with the sound of "jaya" and someone went to Prabhupada to tell him what had transpired.

18

*kalikātā maṭhe takhana prabhupādera vijaya
premānande pūrṇa tāñra haila hṛdaya /
pratna-tatva-vide prabhu dāki dekhāila
ati purātana mudrā sabei kahila*

At that time, Prabhupada happened to be in the Calcutta maṭha. and when he heard the news, his heart was overcome with great love and joy. He called reputed archeologists and when he showed them the deity, they all agreed that it showed signs of great antiquity.

19

*siddhārtha-samhitā dekhi prabhu nāma kaila
astra-bhede adhokṣaja nāma tāñra haila jei /
adhokṣaja kathā prabhu punaḥ punaḥ śiksā
dena bhakti-gaṇe kariyā jatana*

Prabhupada looked in the Siddhārtha-samhitā and ascertained that, according to the way in which the weapons were held in the hands of the four-armed form, it was a deity of Adhokshaja Vishnu. Prabhu had taught his disciples over and over again about the Supreme Lord's adhokṣaja nature, i.e., that He is beyond the purview of the mundane senses.

20

*sei adhokṣaja viṣṇu prakaṭa haiyā
svayam śikhāna tattva daraśana diyā /
krṣṇa-nāma-dhāma ādi indriya-grāhya naya
sevonmukhendriye tāhā sva-prakāśa haya*

This same Adhokshaja Vishnu had manifested His presence before everyone's eyes as if to instruct us in the theological principle of divine revelation—that He can show Himself if He so pleases. Anything connected with Krishna, such as His name or abode, are inaccessible to the material senses. The Lord may be

pleased to manifest Himself to the senses of those who have turned to Him in a spirit of service.

21

*eimate gaura-dhāme basi prabhu aśeṣa-viśeṣe
gaura-dhāma-nāma-kāma sevena hariṣe /
apatita bhāve tina lakṣa nāma laya
avasara-kāle grantha paraya likhaya*

In this way, Prabhupada resided in Gaura Dham, enthusiastically serving His name, His land and His desires. Every single day, he would unfailingly chant three lakhs of Holy Names and when time allowed, he would study and write devotional books.

22

*ūniśa śata caudda sāle āśāṛhī amāvasyāya
śrī-bhaktivinoda ṭhākura praveśena nitya-līlāya /
para-varṣe punaḥ utthānaikādaśī dine
parama-guru gaura-kiśora hailā antardhāne*

In 1914, on the dark moon day of the month of Asharh, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur entered the Lord's eternal pastimes. The following year, on the Utthāna Ekādaśī day, param gurudeva Srila Gaura Kishor Das Babaji Maharaj, also disappeared from worldly view.

23

*parapara dui mahā-puruṣa-niryāṇe
atīva kātara prabhu haileṇa prāṇe /
bara-i nirvede prabhu hā hutāśa kari
kāṇdite lāgilā śudhu phukāri phukāri*

The successive disappearance of these two great personalities left Srila Prabhupada feeling lifeless. He underwent a deep feeling of depression and mourned their loss with heavy tears.

23

*muhur muhuḥ dīrgha-śvāsa chāri prabhu kaya
e chāra parāṇa āmi chāriba niścaya /
vaiṣṇava jagat āji āñdhāra haila
asura-svabhāva jīvera prabhāva bāṛila*

Sighing continually, Prabhu thought that he would soon die himself because of the separation he felt from his spiritual masters. He thought, “Night has fallen on the Vaishnava world and the influence of demoniac people is increasing.

25

*kāra kāche jāi āra juṛāba parāṇa
mora vyathā bujhi kāra jharibe nayāna /
ke śunābe kṛṣṇa-kathā anurāga bhare
para-duḥkha dekhi kāra hṛdaya vidare*

“To whom can I go to find peace of mind? Who will shed tears upon hearing about my distress? Who will affectionately speak to me about Krishna? Whose heart will break at hearing of the distress of others in this world, as theirs would?

26

*mora prabandha nibandha granth kāre dekhāiba
ānanda karibe kebā utsāha dāniba /
pracāra prasāra śuni ke habe prasanna
dhāma-sevaujjvalye kāra bāṛibe ānanda*

“To whom will I show my articles and books? Who will take pleasure in my writings and encourage me to continue? Who will take pleasure in hearing about the preaching work and the increasing splendor of the Holy Dham and our service to it?”

27

*ei mata vilāpa prabhu karena anukṣaṇa
śrī-guru-virahe śūnya dekhena tribhuvana /
hena kāle eka-rātre samādhisthāvasthāya
dekhilena yoga-pīṭha divya-jyotirmaya*

In his mourning, Prabhupada turned these questions over and over in his head, seeing the entire universe as void in their absence. One night, while still in this pitiable condition, he was absorbed in samadhi when he saw the Yoga Pith fill up with a divine light.

28

*purātana nāṭa-mandira abhyantare
pañca-tattva virājita prasanna antare /
tat paścāt śrī-bhaktivinoda mahāśaya
samīpete śrī-gaura-kiśora prabhu haya*

In the old kirtan hall, he saw the Pancha Tattva sitting in great satisfaction. Behind them stood his gurus Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur and Srila Gaura Kishor Prabhu.

29

*prabhupāde sambodhiyā śrī-gaurāṅga kaya
sarasvati kena tava viṣaṇṇa hr̥daya /
adamyā utsāhe tumi karaha pracāra*

kona bhaya nāhi kara habe jaya kāra

Mahaprabhu Himself called out to Srila Prabhupada, saying, “Saraswati! Why are you feeling depressed? Go on preaching with indomitable enthusiasm. Have no fear, for your victory will be glorified everywhere.

30

*agaṇita dhana-bala jana-bala āra
apekṣibe tomā tare ki bhaya kāhāra /
sabe mili āśīrvāda karilā prabhure
prabhu-o sāṣṭāṅga-nati kailā sabākāre*

“Unlimited wealth and manpower await you, so you should have no fear of anyone.” All of Mahaprabhu’s associates then gave Prabhupada their blessings and Prabhupada fell down, prostrating himself before them in obeisance.

31

*prasanna vadane sabe antardhāna hailā
prabhupāda nāmānande rātri goñāilā /
yoga-pīṭhe abhra-bhedī mandira uṭhila
tripurādhīśera dvārā dvārodghāṭana kaila*

Then, with smiles on their faces, they all disappeared. Prabhupada spent the rest of the night absorbed in the joys of the Holy Name. The great skyscraping temple finally went up on the Yoga Pith site and its doors were ceremonially opened by the Maharajah of Tripura.

32

*ūnśa śata āṭhāra sāle mārca māse
gaura-janma-dine prabhu lailā sannyāse /
nitya-siddha gaura-jana loka-śikṣā tare*

tridaṇḍa-dhārana-līlā vaidika vicāre

In March 1918, on the occasion of Mahaprabhu's appearance day, our Prabhu took sannyas. He is an eternally perfect associate of Lord Gauranga and thus his taking of the triple staff of renunciation according to the Vedic regulations was meant for the education of the people in general.

33

*viśva-vyāpī śrī-gauḍīya maṭha samūhera
ākara śrī caitanya maṭha kendra pracārera /
ṣat-ṣaṣṭhi maṭha prabhu sthāpi sthāne sthāne
krṣṇa-kathāmṛta-vanyāra ānilā plāvane*

Prabhupada established Gaudiya Maths throughout the world, but the Chaitanya Math in Mayapur was the headquarters for all these preaching efforts. Altogether, sixty-six maṭhas were established in many different places, bringing down a flood of nectarean Krishna-kathā to the world.

34

*mudrā-yantra sthāpe prabhu bara-i utsāhe
bṛhat-mṛdaṅga bali jāra nāma kahe /
chaya-khāni sāmayika patra vibhinna bhāṣāya
hari-kathā pracārite prabhu prakāśaya*

Prabhu was enthusiastic about setting up printing presses, dubbing them “the big mridangas.” He published six different periodicals in different languages, all for the one purpose of broadcasting the tidings of Lord Hari.

35

*ihā chāṛā bṛhaspati jyotirvid nivedana
māsika dainika patra chila saṅghaṭana /*

*svaracita sampādita bahu grantha chāpi
śrī-bhaktisiddhānta-vāṇī pracārena sarva-vyāpī*

Besides these, he also published [at an earlier time in his life] two periodicals on astrology called Bṛhaspati and Jyotirvid. Some of these periodicals came out daily, some were weekly and some monthly. He also wrote and edited many books by which his message was spread far and wide.

36

*kurukṣetra māyāpura ḍhākā kalikātā
pāṭanā kāśī prayāga ādi jathā tathā /
sat śikṣā pradarśinī sthāpiyā mahatī
śrīmad bhāgavatī śikṣā karilā vistṛti*

In places as varied as Kurukshetra, Mayapur, Dhaka, Calcutta, Patna, Varanasi, and Prayag, he organized great exhibitions of the holy teachings based on the Srimad Bhagavatam.

37

*sabhā sammilanī saṅgha ādi pratiṣṭhāne
sthāpiyā pracāra-kārya kailā sāvadhāne /
śrī-caitanya-pāda-pīṭha hailā prakaṭita
sei saba mahā tīrtha gaura pada pūta*

He organized various assemblies, committees and associations to oversee the preaching activities.¹[\[7\]](#) He also had shrines to the lotus feet of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu installed in various holy places that the Lord had visited.

38

*lupta-tīrthoddhāra āra bhakti-sadācāra
vaiṣṇava-smṛti-saṅkalana śrī-mūrti-pracāra /*

*ācāryera ei cāri krtya prabhu tumi
kariyācha saviśeṣe sarva-guṇe guṇī*

The task of an acharya is to discover and revive the lost holy places, to preach the proper saintly behavior suitable for devotion, to publish books on Vaishnava thought and to establish service to the Lord's deity form. You performed all these tasks in the most perfect manner, being endowed with all the great virtues.

39

*śrī-dhāma-navadvīpe vraja-gaura-mandale
mahā-samārohe parikramā pravartile /
ei parikramā phale pañca mukhya se sādhana
kahiyācha tāra-svare labhe jīva gaṇa*

You commenced various pilgrimage tours for the Vaishnavas, the sixteen kros parikrama of Nabadwip, as well as sixty-four kros parikramas of Vraja mandala and Gaura mandala. You would say that when engaged in parikrama, the jiva performs all the five principal acts of devotion simultaneously.

40

*sādhu-saṅga nāma-kīrtana bhāgavata-śravaṇa
mathurā-vāsa śrī-mūrtira śraddhāya sevana /
sakala-sādhana-śreṣṭha ei pañca aṅga
niṣṭhā haite upayaja premara tarāṅga*

“Associating with devotees, chanting the holy name of the Lord, hearing Srimad Bhagavatam, residing in Mathura and worshiping the Deity with faith and veneration. These five limbs of devotional service are the best of all; waves of love of Godhead will ensue in the hearts of those performing them with fixed determination or niṣṭhā.” (CC 2.22.214, 219)

41

*tāi parikramā bāra ādara kariyā
pratyabda sādhilā bhakta-vṛṇda saṅge laiyā /
tad rūpa vaibhava dhāma dhāma-kṛpā vinā
bhakta-saṅga bhakti-lābha kabhu to haya nā*

For this reason you gave special importance to the annual parikrama, making sure to go yourself every year in the company of your devotees. Without the mercy of the Holy Dham, which possesses such opulence, association of devotees and devotion itself can never be attained.

42

*māghī kṛṣṇā pañcamīte pañca-viṁśa dine
vāra-śata āśi sane baṅgābda gaṇane /
hy utkale puruṣottamāt śāstra-vāṇī
anusari nīlācale udilā āpani*

On the 25th of Magh, the fifth day of the waning moon, in the Bengali year 1280, you appeared in Puri to fulfill the scriptural prophecy that the divine message will be broadcast from Purushottam Dham.

43

*āvirbhūta haile prabhu ati śubha-kṣaṇe
śuddha-bhakti pracārīte tava āgamanē /
mahāprabhu ācarita pracārita nāma
pracārile śuddha-bhāve ohe guṇa-dhāma*

From the auspicious moment that you appeared on this earth, O Prabhupada, you began preaching the process of pure devotional service. O abode of virtue! From that very moment, you preached the Holy Names exemplified by the life and precepts of Sriman Mahaprabhu in utmost purity.

44

*terā-sāta tetālliśā pausa ṣodaśe
māghī kṛṣṇā caturthī tithira śeṣa bhāge /
śrī-rādhā gopīnāthera niśānta līlāya
praveśilā prabhu prathama yāma-sevāya*

In the Bengali year 1342, on the 16th of Paush, or according to the lunar calendar, the fourth days of the waning moon in the month of Magh, you entered the pastimes of Sri Sri Radha-Gopinatha to engage in the first period of Their eternal daily cycle.

45

*nitya-līlā-rasa-prāpti ānanda tomāra
tomāra ānande bate ānanda sabāra /
kintu prapañce prākatya tava nā dekhiyā āra
theke theke prāṇa keñde uṭhe bāra bāra*

What ecstasy you must feel to have entered into the eternal pastimes! And your ecstasy sustains us all! However, now that we no longer see you in this world, we who remain feel the tears of separation welling within us.

46

*nibārite nāri netre bahe aśru-dhāra
kothā nāhi pāi khuṇje sthāna sāntvanāra /
mādrśa ajñāna jīvera kibā gati habe
āra ki pāiba tava caraṇa parāge*

We are incapable of stopping the tears from flowing in torrents from our eyes, and nowhere do we find solace. What will be the outcome for an ignorant fool like myself? Will I ever find the dust of your lotus feet again?

47

*karṇa-dhāra-hīna tarī ki rūpe calibe
e bhava samudra mājhe āvarte paṛibe /
śuniyāchi guru-tattva jīva-nitya-bandhu
kabhu nā chārena śiṣye hana kṛpā Sindhu*

How can a boat sail without a captain? It will be caught in a whirlpool in the midst of this material ocean. We have heard that the spiritual master is the eternal friend of the conditioned soul and out of his mercy he never abandons his disciple.

48

*tāi ta bharasā citte dhari nirantara
adhamā durgate nā chāra ataḥpara /
jñāne vā ajñāne jata karitechi doṣa
sakala śodhiyā prabhu karaha nirdoṣa*

Because of these promises, I am hopeful that you will never abandon me, despite my worthlessness. I have committed so many offenses, sometimes knowingly, sometimes unknowingly. Please purify me and make me offenseless.

49

*parokṣe rākhiyā bakṣe caraṇa-kamala
ghucāo āmāra jata āse amaṅgala /
janaka jananī mātā pitā bandhu tumi
ajña aparādhī jīve nā chāriha svāmī*

By secretly placing your lotus feet on my chest, you removed all the inauspiciousness in my life. You are my father and mother; you are my only friend. You are my master, so never abandon me, even if I am an ignorant and offensive jiva.

50

*tava nitya-dāsa bali more aṅgikāra
tava nija-jana-saṅge rākha atahpara /
sādhu vā asādhu kichu nāhi bujhi āmi
asatyere satya bhrame hai vipatha-gāmī*

Accept me as your eternal servant and keep me henceforward in the company of your personal associates. I have no knowledge of what is good or bad and I am constantly confused about truth and falsehood, being misled down the path of error.

51

*tumi sadā kṛpā kari āmāre cālāo
ohe prabho kabhu more nāhi chāṛi jāo /
bhīma-bhavārṇave dekhi baṛa śaṅkā cite
supathe vipatha bhrama haya ajñānete*

O Master, guide me constantly with your mercy and never abandon me. This terrible ocean of material life fills me with anxiety that I will confuse the right and wrong paths out of ignorance.

52

*tumi more hāte dhare cālāiyā lao
tabe ta supatha dhari vrajera patha pān /
dayāmaya dīna-bandhu patita-pāvana
e adhame āra nāhi chāṛibā kakhana*

Take me by the hand and lead me on the right path, so that I may find my way to Vrindavan. You are most merciful; you are the friend of the destitute, the purifier of the sinful. Never leave this lowly creature again.

53

*śaraṇa lainu tava carāṇa-kamale
e dāsere kara dayā āpanāra bale*

I have taken shelter of your lotus feet. Now I ask you to bless me and call me your own.

54

bhavadīya cira-dāsānudāsa śrī-bhakti-pramoda-purī

Your eternal servant, Sri Bhakti Promode Puri.

Thirty-two Years of Separation

A poem written on the occasion of Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur's thirty-third disappearance day (1970).

[First appeared in Chaitanya Vāṇī, 9.12 (Jan. 1970), pp. 267-71]

1

Prabhupāda!

*eke eke dvātrimśad varṣa gata-prāya
praveśa karecha nitya yugala-līlāya*

Prabhupada! One by one, nearly thirty-two years have passed since you entered the eternal pastimes of the Divine Couple.

2

*vraja-yuva-dvandva jabe niśi-aveśeṣe
gāḍha samāśliṣṭa hana mahāpremāveṣe*

At that moment, it was the end of night when Radha and Krishna were locked in the profound embrace of ecstatic love.

3

*rasarāja-mahābhāva doñhāra milana
śrī gaura-nitya-līlā jāhe karaye sūcana*

The time of your departure reveals that you entered into the pastimes of Gauranga, the union of the King of Sacred Rapture and the Manifestation of Supreme Love.

4

*sekāle se-līlā-rase haiyā magana
audārya-pradhāna mādhurya kara āsvādana*

You thus became immersed in relishing the pastime of Krishna that combines sweetness with the predominating spirit of munificence.

5

*mādhurya-pradhāna audārya śrī-kṛṣṇa-līlāya
kata chala kari kṛṣṇa rādhāre kāndāya*

The characteristic of Krishna's pastimes is munificence with a predominating spirit of sweetness. In those pastimes, Krishna finds so many different ways to make Radharani weep.

6

*lukāye rādhāra prema kare āsvādana
ṛṇī māni āpanāre karaye cintana*

Then Krishna hides to watch and relish Radha's love. Thinking Himself a debtor, Krishna begins to think:

7

*praṇaya mahimā rādhāra āhā kibā hana
rādhāsvādyā man-mādhurya tāhā vā kemana /
ki sukha pāyena rādhāra tāhā āsvādiyā
e-tine viṣaye lubdha haila śyāma-hiyā*

"How can I ever understand the glories of Radha's feelings for Me? And how can I come to know My own sweetness in the way that She does? And how much happiness does Radha Herself enjoy by loving Me?" These questions awakened three desires in Shyamasundara's heart.

8

*viṣayera bhāve vāñchā nahibe pūraṇa
tāi āśrayera bhāva kṛṣṇa karilā grahaṇa*

"As long as I have taken the attitude that I am the object of Her love, I will never be able to experience Her feeling." So thinking, Krishna adopted the nature of the reservoir of loving feeling, Radha.

9

*janama labhiyā navadvīpa-māyāpure
śacī-garbha-sindhu-mājhe gaura-kalevare*

In this mood, Krishna took birth as the son of Sachi in Nabadwip Mayapur in His form as the Golden Avatar.

10

*kāñdilā rādhāra bhāve kāñhā kṛṣṇa bali
uchalila prema-banyā bhāsila sakali*

He spent his life crying in the deep sentiments of Radha, wondering where Krishna had gone, and a flood of love of God flowed from Him, immersing everyone in the world.

11

*cabbīśa vatsara śeṣa chāri gr̥havāsa
calilā śrī-nīlācale kariyā sannyāsa*

After twenty-four years, He renounced householder life, took sannyas, and went to Puri.

12

*chaya-vatsara tīrtha sthāne gatāgati kailā
āṭhāra vatsara dhari śrī-kṣetre rahilā*

For six years He wandered throughout India, visiting many holy places of pilgrimage. He then spent the last eighteen years of His life in Jagannath Puri.

13

*tathi madhye chaya varṣa bhakta-saha mili
rathayātrā ādi līlā dekhila sakali*

Of those eighteen years, the first six were spent meeting His devotees and participating in the Rathayatra and other devotional festivals.

14

śeṣa je dvādaśa vatsara gambhīrā madhyete

svarūpa-rāmarāya sane rahe divyonmāde

In the last twelve years of His life, living in the Gambhira, He went deeper and deeper into divine madness in the company of Svarupa Damodar and Ramananda Raya.

15

vipralambha-rasāveśe rādhā-bhāve gaura

nīlācale sindhu-taṭe kāṇdila pracura

Gaura remained in the mood of Radharani, overcome by the mood of separation, crying profusely on the shores of the ocean at Puri.

16

kāñhā kṛṣṇa prāṇanātha muralī-vadana

kāñhā jān kāñhā pāṇi vrajendranandana /

kāhāre kahiba vyathā kebā jāne duḥkha

vrajendra-nandana binu phāṭe mora buka

He would call out: “Where is the Lord of My life, Krishna, the flute player? What can I do to find Him? Where is the son of Maharaj Nanda? To whom can I talk of My distress? Who would understand Me? Without the son of Nanda Maharaj, My heart splits in two.” (CC 2.2.15-16)

17

sambhogāpeksā vipralambhe adhika mādhurī

tāhā āsvādite tumi janamilā purī

Knowing that there is more sweetness in the mood of separation than in union, O Prabhupada, you took birth in Puri to relish this mood.

18

*bāra-śata-āśi baṅga-abde sindhu-tate
śrī-jagannātha-mandirera ati sannikate*

The year was 1280 of the Bengali era and the place was by the seashore, near the temple of Lord Jagannath.

19

*māghī kṛṣṇā-pañcamī gurubāra aparāhne
śrī-kṛṣṇa-kīrtana-mukharita vāsa-bhūme*

It was the afternoon of a Friday in the month of Magh, the fifth day of the darkening fortnight. The atmosphere was charged with the chanting of Holy Names that filled the house where you were born.

20

*hayecha udaya prabho bhaktera gr̥he
bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu jethā sahajei bahe*

An ocean of divine mélodies flowed profusely when you appeared in the house of the great devotee, Bhaktivinoda Thakur.

21

*śrī-mahā-prasāde tava mukhyānna-prāśana
(ājanma) prasādānna vinā kichu nā kaile grahaṇa*

Your first solid food was the mahā-prasāda of Lord Jagannath, and indeed, from your very birth, you never ate anything but Krishna prasad.

22

*tava āvirbhāva-gr̥ha-dvāre jagannātha
ratha rākhi rahilena tina divārāta*

During the Rathayatra festival, Jagannath's chariot stopped before your house for a full three days and nights.

23

*śrī-bhaktivinoda tabe kailā āyojana
dina-traya hailā tathā mahāsaṅkīrtana*

Your father Bhaktivinoda Thakur organized a great sankirtan festival for that three-day period.

24

*tathi-madhye ekadina māṭr-kroḍa-śāyī
ṣaṇ-māsa-vayaska śiśu uṭhi rathopari*

On one of those days, though you were just a child of six months and still being carried in your mother's arms, you somehow mounted the chariot.

25

*āliṅgile jagannātha-kamala-carāṇa
prabhura prasādī mālā karile grahaṇa*

There you embraced Lord Jagannath's lotus feet and accepted one of his prasadi garlands.

26

*janma hate daśa-māsa rahi purī-dhāme
baṅga-deśe āsi raha mātā-pitā sane*

When you were ten months old, your mother and father took you with them back to Bengal.

27

*śiśu-kāla hate tava kṛṣṇa gāḍha-mati
dekhi māṭṛ-pitṛ-mana ullasita ati*

When they saw your deep attachment for worshiping Krishna, even as a child, they were overjoyed.

28

*vidyā anurāga tava kibā adbhuta
śikṣaka-svajana-gaṇe kailā camakita*

Your extraordinary pleasure in learning amazed both your teachers and family.

29

*śrīrāmapure sthiti-kāle śrī-bhaktivinoda
dekhi tava kṛṣṇa-nāma bhajane pramoda*

While you were living in Serampore (Śrīrāmapura), Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur was delighted to see how much you enjoyed chanting the Holy Names.

30

*purī hate ānāiyā tulasi mālā¹
japibāre mahāmantra upadeśa dilā*

So he brought you a mala made of tulasi wood back from Puri and instructed you in chanting the Maha Mantra.

31

*śrī-nṛsiṁha-mantra-rāja-o dilena tomāre
bhakti-vighna-vināśite jiñho śakti dhare*

He also gave you the great mantra for worshiping Nrisingha Deva; it contains the potency to destroy all obstacles on the path of devotion.

32

*śrī-caitanya-śikṣāmṛta parālena tomā
dekhilena bodha-śakti tava anupamā*

When he recognized your unparalleled power of comprehension, your father gave you lessons in Vaishnava theology from his book, Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta.

33

*kalikātā-rāma-bāgāne bhakti-bhavana
grha-bhitti jei kāle haila khanana
(tat-kāle) kūrma-deva-mūrti eka halena prakāśita
tāhā dekhi hale prabhu kata haraṣita*

When foundations were being dug for the Bhakti Bhavan in Calcutta's Ram Bagan neighborhood, a deity of Kurma Deva was found. O Master, you were ecstatic to see the deity appear in this way.

34

*pūjibāre sei mūrti hala tava mana
tāhā jāni bhaktivinoda ānandita hana*

You desired to worship this deity and this greatly pleased Srila Thakur Bhaktivinoda.

35

pūjā-mantra pūjā-vidhi upadeśa dilā

yathā-vidhi sei mūrti pūjite lāgilā

He thus gave you the mantra for worshiping the Kurma deity as well as instructions about what to do. You began to worship the deity according to the proper rules and regulations.

36

*tilakādi sadācāra śisukāla hate
pāliyācha tumi prabho bhakti-pūta cite*

O Prabhu, from your early childhood you accepted the practices of the Vaishnavas, such as wearing tilak, with a mind purified by devotion.

37

*nitya-siddha tumi prabho sādhane jatana
loka-śikṣā tare śudhu kailā prakaṭana*

You are an eternally perfect being, so the external efforts you made at practicing devotional service were simply for setting an example for the rest of us.

38

*(ṭhākura) śrī-bhaktivinoda-kṛta bhakti-grantha jata
parecha sakali tāñra haiyā anugata*

You read all of Thakur Bhaktivinoda's books on devotion and followed in his footsteps in every other way.

39

*mahājana-viracita āro grantha śata
adhyayana adhyāpanā kariyācha kata*

You also carefully studied and taught the many hundreds of other books written

by great authorities on spiritual life.

40

*prupha-rīdin ādi kārya śikhi śisū hate
ṭhākurera sahāyatā kailā bhāla mate*

Even when you were a little boy, the Thakur taught you how to proofread and to assist him in other ways in the publication work.

41

*grantha patrikādi jata pracāre tāñhāra
sevā-buddhye sahāyatā karecha apāra*

In this way you helped him publish many books and journals, doing all these things in a spirit of service.

42

*kata āśīrvāda tiñho karechena tomā
guru-sevādarśa prabho tomāte upamā*

The Thakur thus blessed you immeasurably and you set the standard by which each of us can compare our own service to the spiritual master.

43

*jyotirvidyāya tava advitīyādhikāra
vidvad-vareṇya sabe hailā camatkāra*

Your knowledge of astrology was incomparable. Everyone was amazed at your mastery of various fields of learning.

44

*atyalpa vayasa dekhi apūrva pratibhā
sabe bale e-bālaka asāmānya kebā*

Even while you were very young, people were astonished to see your numerous talents and would say, “There is no one like this boy anywhere.”

45

*mahābhāgavata guru sakale tomāre
śrī-siddhānta-sarasvatī upādhi vitare*

Your masters recognized that you would become a mahābhāgavata spiritual master and thus gave you the title Sri Siddhanta Saraswati.

46

*ūnaviṁśa-śata aṣṭādaśa khṛṣṭa
abde tridaṇḍa-sannyāsa jabe lailā śāstra mate
takhana se śrī-bhaktisiddhānta sarasvatī
nāmete haila sarva jagatete khyāti*

In 1918, when you took tridaṇḍa-sannyāsa according to scriptural injunctions, you changed this name to Sri Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati, by which you became famous throughout the world.

47

*parivrājakācārya-rūpe bhārata bhramilā
śrī-caitanya-candrera vāṇī viśve bilāilā*

Then you became a parivrājakācārya and traveled throughout India, preaching the message of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to the world.

48

*tomāra śrī-mukha-vāṇī śuni bhāgyavān
druta āsi lailena śrī-caraṇe sthāna*

So many fortunate persons who heard you quickly came and took shelter at your lotus feet.

49

*śrī-bhaktivinoda ṭhākurera pratiṣṭhita
śrī-viśva-vaiṣṇava-sabhbā kaile ujjīvita*

You enlivened the World Vaishnava Association (Visva Vaishnava Raja Sabha) that Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur had reestablished.

50

*ai sabhbāya haita pāṭha prati rabibāre
bhakti-rasāmrta-sindhu-grantha bhakti-sāre*

The Thakur lectured in that august assembly every Sunday, extracting the devotional ambrosia from the great ocean of Rupa Goswami's Bhakti-rasāmrta-sindhu.

51

*śrī-bhaktivinoda ṭhākura karitena vyākhyā
satya satya uchalita amṛta-sindhu tathā*

When Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur explained this book, the ocean of nectar truly overflowed.

52

*prabho tumi sei grantha bahi ānite sabhbāya
basiyā śunite śāstra ekānta hiyāya*

Prabhu, you would carry the book into the assembly and then sit down and listen attentively.

53

kṛṣṇa-bhakta-saṅge sadā kṛṣṇa-kathā raṅge

rahiyā bhesecha sadā premara tarāṅge

Thus you enjoyed listening to Krishna-kathā in the company of devotees, floating in the waves of ecstatic love.

54

skula-pāṭhya-grantha saba pari alpa-kṣaṇe

bhakti-grantha pāṭhemana diyācha nirjane

You went through all your schoolbooks very quickly and then spent the greater part of your time secretly studying devotional literature.

55

jyotiṣa-śāstrete chila prabalānurāga

bhakti-bādhā haya bali tāhā kailā tyāga

You also were extremely interested in studying astrology, but finally you gave it up as an obstacle to pure devotion.

56

śrī-bhaktivinoda ṭhākura-mahāśaya sane

bhramiyācha bahu-tīrtha kṛṣṇa-anvesane

With Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur you traveled to many holy places, engaged in the search for Sri Krishna.

57

*śrī-bhaktivinoda ṭhākura-ājñā anusāre
atimartya caritra eka avadhūta bare*

Then, being instructed by Thakur Bhaktivinoda, you received the blessings of an avadhūta of extraordinary character.

58

*bhāgavatī dīkṣā labha guru-rūpe bari
(tad-āśraye) nirviṇṇa haiyā bhaja girivara-dhārī*

You accepted him as your guru and received Bhagavata initiation, whereupon you became even more detached from material life and began to worship the Lord of Govardhana.

59

*śrī-candraśekharālaye māyāpura-dhāme
ekānte bāndhiyā kuṭī bhaja avirāme*

In Mayapur, at the site of Chandrasekhara's house, you built a thatched cottage where you lived all alone, worshiping the Lord without repose.

60

*haridāsa-ṭhākurera ādarśānusari
tina lakṣa nāma laha bahu ārtti kari*

You followed the example set by Hari Das Thakur, fervently chanting three lakhs of Holy Names every day.

61

cāturmāsyā-vrata-kāle kaṭhora vairāgya

pāliyā bhajechā kṛṣṇe kari nāma-yajñā

You took up the intense asceticism of the Chaturmasya vow, worshiping Krishna in the sacrifice of the Holy Name.

62

śata-koṭi mahāmantra karecha kīrtana

bhūmete gogrāse haviṣya karecha grahaṇa

You chanted a billion Holy Names in that period, eating only unspiced gruel from the ground without using your hands.

63

anya-vākyālāpa nāhi kṛṣṇa-nāma

binu aharniśa cakṣu-jale bhāsiyāche tanu

You never used your tongue to say anything other than the Holy Names. Day and night, tears washed over your entire body.

64

ādarśa bhajana-ceṣṭā dekhiyā tomāra

hayeche vismita sabe jaṅgama sthāvara

All living beings, both moving and unmoving, were astonished at your exemplary method of worshiping the Supreme Lord.

65

(śrī)-rūpānuga gaura-śakti śrī-bhaktivinoda

(śrī)-gaura-mano' bhīṣṭa-sevāya sadā jāṇra moda

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur is the potency of Sri Gauranga and a true follower of Sri Rupa. His only pleasure in life is in the service of establishing Mahaprabhu's

mission in this world.

66

*gaura-deśe gaura-janma-sthāna nirūpila
nirmatsara gaura-jana ānande mātila*

He designated the birthplace of Mahaprabhu in His abode of Nabadwip. This gave great pleasure to the non-envious devotees of Lord Gauranga.

67

*(śrī)-jagannātha-dāsa tathā śrī-gaura-kiśora
nitya-siddha gaura-jana nitya-parikara*

Jagannath Das Babaji and Srimad Gaura Kishor were eternal associates of Lord Gurasundara. They are eternally perfect.

68

*sabe mili eka-vākye kahe tāra-svare
gaurāṅgera janma-sthāne ei māyāpure*

These great saints and others joined together to loudly proclaim that Gauranga's birthplace was indeed here in Mayapur.

69

*ei sei suprācīna nadīyā-nagarī
sapārṣade jathā līlā kailā gaura-hari*

This is the site of the ancient city of Nabadwip and it is here that Gaura Hari and His eternal companions performed their pastimes.

70

*sarasvatī bhagīrathī saṅgama sthānete
gaura-gr̥ha haya ballāla-dīghikā nikate*

Mahaprabhu's home stands at the confluence of the Saraswati and the Bhagirathi Rivers, near the tank dug by King Ballal Sen.

71

*ekhano rayeche cihna ballāla-dīghira
dhvam̄sa-sthūpa virājita ballāla-bāṭīra*

The signs of Ballal's tank and the ruins of his palace can still be found there.

72

*kājīra samādhi ai ta rahe avidūre
(kata) prācīna kāhinī kahe mauna-mudrā dhare*

Not very far from this spot is the tomb of Chand Kazi. How many stories from the past this land would tell us if only it could speak!

73

*sei ta cinmaya-dhāma cinmaya-saundarya
sei ta gaurāṅga-līlāra cinmaya-mādhurya*

This Holy Dham is completely spiritual and its beauty is completely spiritual, just as Gauranga's pastimes are of a completely divine sweetness.

74

*āpamare prema-dāna apūrva audārya
saba āche nāhi mora bhajana-cāturya*

Lord Gauranga's munificence in giving love of Godhead is incomparable. All this potential for spiritual perfection exists, but I am without a mind for worship.

75

*tāi bhāgya-hīna āmi bujhite nārinu
premera ṭhākura gaura hāya nā bhajinu*

Therefore, I am the most unfortunate soul and have not been able to understand.
Alas! I have not worshiped the Lord of Love Divine, Sri Gauranga.

78

*adyāpi ta gaurahari dubāhu tuliyā
nācichena hari bali premete mātiyā*

Even today, Gaura Hari raises His arms in the air and dances here, intoxicated
with the ecstasy of love and shouting, “Haribol!”

79

*nije kāndi kāndāiche sarvanārī-nare
vitariche vraja-prema giyā ghare ghare*

He himself cried tears of love and made every man and woman cry with Him.
He went from door to door, distributing the gifts of Vraja prema.

80

*tava kṛpā vinā prabho kon jīva chāra
se mahāvadānya-līlā dekhibe gorāra*

O lord, what insignificant jiva can see the most munificent pastimes of
Gaurahari without your mercy?

81

viṣaya-dhulāya andha jāhāra nayana

kirūpe dekhibe sei tava prāṇa-dhana

How can one whose vision has been blinded by the dust of sense desire expect to see your gift of life divine?

82

gaura-kṛpā-śakti tumi gaura-nija-jana

gaura-dhāma gaura-nāma tomāra jīvana

You are the manifestation of Gaura's potency of compassion and His personal associate. The name and abode of Sri Gauranga are your life and soul.

83

tumi jāñre kṛpā kari deha divya-netra

gaura-līlā nirakhite tiñho yogya pātra

Whoever you mercifully give divine sight becomes qualified to see the pastimes of Lord Gauranga.

84

nirvyalīka haye tava caraṇe śaraṇa

nārinu labhite tāi adhanya jīvana

I have not been able to take shelter of your lotus feet without any ulterior motivation. Thus, my life is most unfortunate.

85

ayogya adhame kṛpā kara dayāmaya

amāyāya abhāgāre ṭāni laha pāya

O most compassionate one! Please be merciful to this unqualified and fallen soul. Without guile, draw this luckless servant close to your lotus feet.

86

*tabe ta haibe dhanya ei abhājana
samarpibe o caraṇa kāya-prāṇa-mana*

Then I will be blessed, and though I am unworthy, I will surrender myself in body, mind, and soul to your lotus feet.

87

*sebibe parāṇa bhari o-pada-kamala
daikṣya-janma tabe tāre haibe saphala*

I will then serve those feet with all my life's energy. In this way, my life as your initiated disciple will bear fruit.

88

*śrī-guru-prasāda vinā śrī-kṛṣṇa-prasāda
kichu nāhi haya āro ghaṭaye pramāda*

Without the mercy of the spiritual master, Krishna's mercy is an impossibility. One simply commits errors on the spiritual path.

89

*prasanna haile guru sarva-siddhi haya
gaura-kṛṣṇa-kṛpā tāñre haya suniścaya*

If the guru is satisfied with his disciple, then all perfections are possible. Without any doubt, Gaura and Krishna's mercy will be showered on him.

90

śuddha-bhakti-śikṣā-dātā sad-guru jagate

bara-i durlabha vastu milaye bhāgyete

The genuine spiritual master in this world gives instruction on pure devotional service. Such a rare thing can only come to those who are exceedingly fortunate.

91

*hena ratna pāiyāo jei ajñā-nara
(jara)-viṣaye bhuliyā tāṅre kare anādara*

And yet some ignorant people possess this rare jewel and still forget about it or ignore it, concentrating on material sense gratification instead.

92

*bhāgya-hīna kebā āra āche tāra sama
sudhā chāṛi viṣa māge se bhrānta adhama*

Who is more wretched than such a person? This fool is so confused that he rejects the ambrosia of the gods and begs for poison.

93

*hena guru-pāda-padme haye-o āśrita
gaura-prema-rasāsvāde haila vañcita*

Though I have taken shelter of such a genuine spiritual master's lotus feet, I have been deprived of the taste of divine love as given by Mahaprabhu.

94

*gurv-ātma-daivata haiyā bhāgavata-dharma
śuniyā śikhaye jei sarva-śāstra-marpa*

One who makes his spiritual master the worshipable deity of his soul and listens to the instructions on Bhagavata Dharma from him learns the true purport

of all the scriptures.

95

aikāntikī bhakti-saha gaura-kṛṣṇa bhaje

śrī-guru-kṛpāya sei prema-rase maje

He worships Gaura and Krishna with exclusive devotion and, by the spiritual master's mercy, becomes immersed in the delights of ecstatic love.

96

guru-kṛta upakāra smariyā satata

śrī-guru-caraṇe prīti haya to vardhita

As he constantly remembers the good the spiritual master has done for him, his love for him also increases.

97

prīti jata gāḍha haya bāṛhaye mamatā

guru-sevā lāgi prāṇe jāge vyākulatā

As this love strengthens, his attachment also becomes stronger and he becomes anxious to serve the spiritual master.

98

(takhana) kṣaṇekera adarśana sahite nā pāre

guru-pāda-padma smari sadā āṅkhi jhare

Then, he can no longer tolerate even a moment in the guru's absence. Whenever he remembers the guru's lotus feet, his eyes fill with tears.

99

śrī-guru-mahimā kare satata smaraṇa

guru-mukha-vākyā citte karaye milana

He ceaselessly remembers the resplendence of Sri Guru and enthrones his words on his heart.

100

guru-mano’bhīṣṭa sevā vinā nāhi jāne

guru prīta hale māne sārthaka jīvane

He knows nothing but the service of the spiritual master's innermost desires. He considers his life to be perfected if he can only please his spiritual master.

101

gurudeva jāhā nāhi bāsitena bhāla

tāhā tiñho kabhu nāhi smare kṣaṇa-kāla

The devoted disciple never thinks for a moment of anything his guru did not like.

102

viraha-tithira pūjā sei jana kare

śrī-guru-vihane jāra hr̥daya vidare

When the disciples gather to worship the spiritual master on the day of his disappearance, this disciple feels his heart tear into pieces in his separation.

103

dhyāna jñāna sarvasva jāhāra guru-pada

guru-prīti māne jei parama-sampada

nija lābha-pūjā-khyāti svapne-o nā cāya

*śrī-guru-mahimā vrddhi satata cintaya
dveṣa-himsā-matsarya nāhi mane jānra
śrī-guru-sevake māne mānya āpanāra*

He for whom the spiritual master's lotus feet are the object of meditation, all that he knows and all that he possesses, who takes the spiritual master's pleasure to be his supreme achievement, who does not endeavor for his own profit, adoration or prestige, even in dreams, and who only thinks of how to spread the fame of his spiritual master, who has not the slightest amount of hatred, jealousy or envy in his heart, and who reveres all other servants of his spiritual master, thinks as follows:

104

*śrī-guru-dāsānudāsa muñi bhṛtyādhama
āmāra prabhura bhakta sakale uttama*

"I am the servant of my guru's servants, the most insignificant of his lackeys, and all of my spiritual master's devotees are eminently qualified;

105

*āmi tānhādera dāsa-anudāsa hañā
seviba śrī-guru-pada parāṇa bhariyā*

"I will simply follow in their footsteps and serve my spiritual master's lotus feet with all my life energy."

106

*guru-vākyā eka āśraya-vigrahānugatye
sabe mile miše sevā kara eka cite*

Prabhupada! Your last instructions were as follows: "Accepting the reservoir of devotion, Sri Radha, as your lead and serving the divine words of the spiritual master, all of you should cooperate in his service.

107

*(śrī)-rūpa-prabhu-pada-dhūli modera svarūpa
rāgānuga cintā-srotah pravāhita hauk*

“Our eternal identity is to be specks of dust at the lotus feet of Sri Rupa Goswami. May the stream of rāgānugā bhakti flow forever.

108

*sapta-jihva kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana-yajña prati
anurāga haile habe sarva artha-siddhi*

“If we have enthusiasm for the seven-flamed fire of the sacrifice of Krishna sankirtan, then all purposes of life will be achieved.

109

*rūpānuga-jana-ānugatya kari sadā
rūpa-raghunātha vāṇī pracāra sarvathā*

“Follow in the footsteps of the followers of Rupa Goswami and preach Sri Rupa and Sri Raghunath’s message in any way that you can.

110

*bhaktivinoda-dhārā kabhu ruddha nāhi
habe bhaktivinoda-mano’bhīṣṭa sadā pracāribe*

“The line of service coming down from Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur will never be obstructed. Always preach that which was close to his heart.

111

anurāga vā virāga-pātra keha nāhi bhave

(jāgatika) ākarṣaṇa-vikarṣaṇātīta hate

habe “No one in this world is worthy of your love or hate. You must transcend all material attractions and repulsions.

112

kṛṣṇa-pāda-padma-sevā nitya-prayojana

tāhe lakṣya sthira rākhi jāpibe jīvana

“The true goal of life is service to the lotus feet of Krishna. Keep that aim clearly in your mind as you go through life.

113

ekoddeśye aikatāne avasthita haye

mūlāśraya-vigraha seva jatana kariye

“Keeping this single purpose in mind and working together, make the effort to serve Srimati Radharani—the original reservoir of love for Krishna.

114

vipada gañjanā śata śata lāñchanāya

kabhu nāhi teyāgibe śrī-hari-sevāya

“Let hundreds of dangers, insults or persecutions come, but despite them, do not ever give up your worship of Krishna.

115

ṭṛṇāpeksā hīna sahiṣṇu taru-sama

amānī mānada haye labe kṛṣṇa-nāma

“Always chant the Holy Name while being more humble than the grass, as tolerant as the tree, respectful of all others and not desirous of any respect for

yourself.”

116

*dayāmaya prabhupāda tava śeṣa vākyā
karitechi anādara kari matānaikya*

O most compassionate Srila Prabhupada! These were your last words. I have not given myself sufficiently to following them and I even hold different opinions.

117

*tumi kṛpā kari modera hṛdaye basiyā
tavājñā pālana karāo śakti sañcāriyā*

Please be merciful to us and take up residence in our hearts. Give us strength so that we may follow your instructions.

118

*tava yaśo-gāthā gāhi sakale miliyā
tava mano' bhīṣṭa sevi eka-citta hañā*

May we all come together to sing your glories. May we be of one mind in serving your mission.

119

*śrī-caitanya-vāṇī viśve kariyā pracāra
tava sukha sādhī ei hauka vicāra*

May we only seek to bring you pleasure by preaching Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's teachings throughout the world.

120

*tava kṛtī śiṣya madhye āmi to adhama
śikhāye śaraṇāgati karahe uttama*

So many disciples of your disciples have become accomplished; I am most insignificant. Please teach me how to surrender so that I may also be uplifted.

121

*lekhānī-dhāraṇe śakti deha he āmāre
krṣṇa-kārṣṇa guṇa jena pāri barnibāre*

Give me the strength to take up the pen, so that I may glorify Sri Krishna and His devotees through writing.

122

*jihvāya sphurāo vāṇī kaṇṭhe uccasvara
guru-gaura-krṣṇa-guṇa gāhi nirantara*

May the message of the Lord always appear on my tongue; may I loudly sing the qualities of Sri Guru, Gauranga and Sri Krishna.

123

*prāṇavān bhakta-mukhe śrī-krṣṇa-kīrtana
śunite āgraha prabho kailā prakaṭana*

Krishna's names and glories can be sung by a devotee who is filled with life. O Master! You showed eagerness to hear such kirtan.

124

*kintu je śaraṇāgati bhaktera prāṇa kothā
pāba sei prāṇa ki gāhiba gāna*

But where will I learn to take shelter and thus find this life of surrender so that I

may effectively sing your glories?

125

*tabe jadi prabho more prāṇavān kara
prāṇa-hīna śaba-dehe śakati-sañcāra
tabe ta gāhite pāri kṛṣṇa-guṇa-gāthā
sukhī hate pāra śuni prāṇavanta kathā*

If then, O Master, you fill me with divine life; if you fill this lifeless body with power—then I will be able to sing Krishna's glories. May I be able to make you joyful by reciting such life-filled discussions of Krishna for you.

126

*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-śalākayā
cakṣur-unmīlitam yena tasmai śri-gurave namah*

My eyes were blinded by the darkness of ignorance. I offer my obeisance to the spiritual master who has opened them with the collyrium of divine knowledge.

127

*namas te gaura-vāṇī-śrīmūrtaye dīna-tāriṇe
rūpānuga-viruddhāpasiddhānta-dhvānta-hāriṇe*

O Lord, embodiment of Hari kirtan. You eliminate the darkness of spiritual misconception that obscure the teachings of Sri Rupa and his followers. I pay my obeisances to you again and again.

A Place at Your Lotus Feet

A humble offering to my spiritual master Om Vishnupada 108 Sri Srimad Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur on his 34th disappearance day.

[From Chaitanya Vāṇī 10.11, (Dec. 1970), pp. 249-251.]

1

Gurudeva!

*sudīrgha cautriśa varṣa modera chāriyā
nitya-līlā-rase magna ācho vraja-dhāme /
vajra-sama hiyā tāi tomā pāsariyā
ekhano dharite cāi e chāra parāṇe*

O Gurudeva! It has been a long thirty-four years since you left us and immersed yourself in the eternal pastimes of the Lord in Vrindavan. My heart must be as hard as stone, for I have forgotten you and yet I still hold on to this worthless life.

2

*(āra) ke śunābe kṛṣṇa-kathā jatana kariyā
kṛṣṇa-vimukhatā hate kari sābadhāna /
ke dibe abhaya-vāṇī sneha vitariyā
ātmāra carama-gati karābe sandhāna*

Who now will take care to explain Krishna to us, warning us not to be indifferent to the Lord's service? Who will affectionately assure us not to be afraid? And who will direct us to the ultimate destination of the soul?

3

dardaiva āmāra prabho emanī prabala

*tava upadeśa-mantra nā pāri smarite /
ki rūpe haibo mukta māyāra kabala
krṣṇa-bhakti kise pābo krṣṇa-pāse jete*

O master! My misfortune is so great that I cannot remember the instructions you gave us. How can I get free of the clutches of Maya, and how can I get devotion to Krishna so that I can go and join Him?

4

*janaka jananī āra ātmīya svajana
sabākāra kṛta snehe ache māyā-gandha /
(kintu) tava snehe mukta kari māyāra bandhana
śrī-krṣṇa-bhajane deya dṛḍha anubandha*

In this world, all the affection given us by our parents, or by our friends and families, is contaminated with the touch of illusion. Your affection, however, frees us from the bondage of matter and gives us the firm resolution to practice Krishna bhajan.

5

*nāhi bujhi hāya tāhā māyāra vikrame
tava hita-ceṣṭā prati hai udāsīna /
diyāchi kata-i vyathā tomāra marame
āṅkhi-nīre bhāsāyecho bakṣah kata dina*

Maya is so powerful, however, that I do not understand all this and so am indifferent to all the efforts you have made for my welfare. I must have touched your heart with so much pain, for your chest was covered with tears for many days.

6

*adoṣa-daraśī prabho patita-uddhāra
mo-sama patita lāgi haiyā udaya /
golokera dhana preme karite vistāra
sahile kata nā kaṣṭa ohe dayāmaya*

O Prabhu! You see no fault in others and are the savior of the fallen. You appeared in this world for the sake of unredeemable souls like myself. O compassionate one, you underwent so much difficulty in order to spread the wealth of divine love of Goloka far and wide.

7

*hari-kathā-amṛterā durbhikṣa-darśane
kātara hayeche tava komala hr̥daya /
(tāi) maṭha-mandirādi kata prakāśi jatane
pracārile śuddha-bhakti sarva-deśa-maya*

Your soft heart was disturbed upon seeing the famine of nectarean Hari-kathā in this world. In order to remedy the problem, you constructed so many maṭhas and temples, preaching pure devotional service in every part of the country.

8

*sthāne sthāne mudrā-yantra kariyā sthāpana
bhakti-grantha patrikādi vibhinna bhāṣāya /
prakāśiyā hari-kathā kaile vitarāṇa
jaga-jane kariyācha kṛpā amāyāya*

You established printing presses in various places and published devotional books and periodicals in different languages. In this way you distributed Krishna-kathā everywhere, open-heartedly giving your blessings to all the people of the world.

9

*mūrtimatī gaura-kṛpā-śakti hao tumi
śrī-gaura-audārya-guṇe tāi guṇī hai' /
prakāśile gaura-gāthā haiyā udyamī
ahaitukī kṛpā tava hena dekhi nāi*

You are the embodiment of Gauranga's compassionate energy; you possess His quality of benevolence. You made great efforts to explain Mahaprabhu to everyone; I have never seen causeless mercy such as yours anywhere.

10

*bhāgavata pradarśinī tava āviṣkṛta
tāhā dvārā vistāraha bhakti-sāstra-sāra /
susiddhānta tāhe raya hṛdaye aṅkita
alpāyāse haya bara susthāyī pracāra*

You had the idea of making diorama exhibitions illustrating the Bhagavatam as a way of making the essence of the devotional scriptures available to everyone, even the illiterate. When people see these exhibitions, the doctrines of all the scriptures become inscribed on their hearts and remain there. Thus with only a little effort, great preaching results are achieved.

11

*daiva-varṇāśrama-dharma kari pravartana
bhakti-mārgē nara-mātre dile adhikāra /
tava upadeśāmṛta kariyā varāṇa
āpāmare labhiteche gaura-śikṣā-sāra*

You conceived of a divine social system called daiva-varṇāśram, by which every single human being is given the qualifications to engage in devotional service. Even the most wretched humans could understand the essence of Mahaprabhu's teaching by listening to your nectarean instruction.

12

*satye dhyāna tretāya yajña dvāpare arcana
kariyā je phala-lābha kariyāche nara /
kali-yuge eka-mātra nāma-saṅkīrtana
hate sei saba labhya haya ataḥpara*

The results that humans achieved from meditation in the Satya-yuga, sacrifice in the Treta-yuga, deity worship in the Dvapara-yuga, can be achieved in the Kali-yuga by the chanting of the Holy Names alone. Therefore Harinam sankirtan is the religious practice from this time on.

13

*viśeṣataḥ ei dhanya kali-yuga-sāre
vraja-prema labhe jīva śrī-gaura-kṛpāya /
śrī-nāme višeṣa śakti kariyā saṅcāre
(sei) nāma-dvāre gaura prema jīvere bilāya*

And this Kali-yuga is especially fortunate because every living being can attain ecstatic divine love by the mercy of Gauranga Mahaprabhu. He invested His holy names with a particular power so that through them He could distribute love to the people of the world.

14

*(tāi) śata-koṭi nāma-japa-yajña samāpiyā
pratidina lakṣa nāma karecho grahaṇa /
bhajana-ādarśa prabhu jīve dekhāiyā
śrī-nāma-bhajanotsāha karaha vardhana*

Therefore you took up a vow to chant a billion Names, and after completing it, chanted at least a lakh every single day. This was the standard that you set in

order to encourage all of us to engage in chanting the Holy Names.

15

(*ābāra*) *nāma-sama dhāma-sevādarśa prakaṭiyā*
(*gaura-dhāma*) *mūla maṭha karile sthāpana /*
śrī-caitanya-maṭha tāra nāma se ghosiyā
śrī-gauḍīya-maṭha nāme śākhā agaṇana

Just as you served the Holy Name, you also displayed the ideal in serving the Holy Dham. In Mayapur, the home of Gauranga, you established the headquarters of the numerous Gaudiya Maths, calling it Chaitanya Math.

16

navadvīpa-dhāma parikramā ārambhile
pañca-mukhya bhakti aṅga jāhe sādhya haya /
gauḍa-vraja-kṣetra tina-maṇḍala bhramile
jāhāṅ līlā kaila gaura-kṛṣṇa prema-maya

You began the tradition of circumambulating Nabadwip Dham, saying that by so doing, everyone could engage in all the five main devotional activities. You visited all three of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas' holy lands where Krishna and Mahaprabhu lived, Gauda, Vraja and Jagannath Puri.

17

prthivī byāpiyā habe nāmera pracāra
ei gaura-mano’bhīṣṭa karile pūraṇa /
patita-pāvana nāma sārthaka tomāra
sāgara-pāreo nāma kaile vitarāṇa

Through you, Mahaprabhu's wish that the glories of the Holy Name be spread

throughout the world became a reality. You sent preachers of the Holy Name across the ocean, thus your title, patita-pāvana (“savior of the fallen”), is most appropriate.

18

*śuddha-bhakti-pratikūla je je mata-caya
parama jatane tāhā karecho khaṇḍana /
nirapekṣa naile dharma rakṣā nāhi haya
e veda purāṇe sadā karena kīrtana*

You took great care to show the inconsistencies in all the philosophical positions that oppose pure devotional service, for as the Vedas and Puranas claim, one cannot find the truth of religion unless one is impartial.

19

*bara-i durdina prabho bhārata ekhana
jadīya-sarvasva-vāda hayeche prabala /
śāstra-dharma kichu nāhi māne jīva-gaṇa
tuccha jara-svārtha-tare hayeche capala*

Prabhu, now that you are gone a terrible calamity has befallen India. Materialism has become dominant and nobody respects the scriptures or religious principles any more. Everyone is busily scurrying about in search of their own petty selfish interests.

20

*dveṣa himsā mātsarya haiyā pūrita
hitāhita-jñāna-śūnya hayeche mānava /
bhāye bhāye hatya-kāṇḍa dekhi viparīta
krṣṇa-māyā-mohe mugdha je hena yādava*

Everyone is filled with hatred, envy and jealousy. No one knows what is truly beneficial for the self and what is not. Everywhere we see fratricidal struggles, just as occurred amongst the Yadavas when they were under the influence of Krishna's Maya.

21

*antarikṣa hate prabho śakti sañcāriyā
rakṣa rakṣa jīva-gaṇe e ghora saṅkāṭe /
krṣṇa-sevonomukha kara śuddha-buddhi diyā
svarūpera udbodhana kara niṣkāpaṭe*

O Prabhu, from your place in the spiritual sky, give us the energy to save the deluded souls in this terrible time. Make us favorable to Krishna's service by giving us pure intelligence; awaken knowledge of our true identity.

22

*śrī-gaura-karuṇā-śakti tumi gaura-jana
gaurāṅgera priya gauḍa-gaurava rākhite /
gaurecchāya hayechila tava āgamana
ābāra eso he nātha jīva uddhārite*

You are Gauranga's personal associate and the manifestation of His compassionate potency. You are most dear to Gauranga and have appeared to restore the reputation of Gauda, His land. O Lord, You came here once at Gauranga's will, now please come once again to deliver the conditioned souls.

23

*uṭhuk jāguk jīva tomāra kṛpāya
udbuddha-svarūpe karuk krṣṇānusandhāna /
nitya-krṣṇa-dāsa jīva kena vā māyāya*

mugdha haye bhule rabe kṛṣṇa-guṇa-gāna

May all the jivas awake and rise up by your mercy. May they understand their true identity as Krishna's servants and seek Him out. Why do all these eternal servants of the Lord become bewildered by Maya and forget to glorify Him?

24

*devatā-vāñchita ei bhārata-ajira
muni-ṛṣi-adhyuṣita vaikuṇṭha-prāṅgana /
jathā rājya kari dharma-rāja yudhiṣṭhira
aśvamedha rājasūya kareche yajana*

Even the demigods seek birth in the land of Bharatavarsha, where the saints and sages dwelt. It is considered the anteroom to the spiritual world of Vaikuntha. It is here that the righteous emperor Yudhishthira reigned and performed the Rajasuya sacrifice.

25

*veda-gāna-mukharita jāra tapo-vane
simha-śiśu-sane krīḍā kareche bharata /
dharma-kṣetra bali jāra prasiddhi bhuvane
sethā paśācika nritya haya ki saṅgata*

This land of India is where ascetics sang the Vedic hymns in the sanctity of the forests and where Bharata played with the lion cubs. Throughout the world, India is known as a pious land; is it then proper that such a demoniac dance should take place there?

26

*yuge yuge je bhārate svayam̄ bhagavān̄
sapārṣade kata līlā kailā suvistāra /*

*(tānra) śrī-carana-cihna jathā āchaye amlāna
brahmādi-vandita jāra dhuli sārātsāra*

In every age, the Supreme Lord Himself appears in this land along with His associates and performs extensive pastimes. The Lord's footprints marked this land and have not yet faded, thus Brahma and the gods worship the dust of this land.

27

*sei pūta-dhūli pare eki vibhīṣikā
smariteo sarva aṅga uṭhiche śihari /
eso prabho kṛpā kari karo dharma rakṣā
ghucāo bhārata-vyathā gāhiyā śrī-hari*

My entire body shivers to even think that such horrors are taking place in this holy dust. O Master! Please come and restore the religious principles. Sing the glories of Krishna and free this land of Bharatavarsha from its pain.

28

*kata aparādhī āmi o rāṅgā caraṇe
jñāta vā ajñāta-sāre kata doṣe doṣī /
kata vyathā diyāchi o komala parāṇe
kṣama prabho saba doṣa adoṣa-daraśī*

How many offenses I have committed to your lotus feet, either knowingly or unknowingly. How much pain have I caused your tender heart, please forgive me of all my offenses, for you do not take faults into consideration.

29

*prāya pañcāśad varṣa labhiyā āśraya
bhajanera śudhu-mātra abhinaya kari /*

*śuṣka maru-bhūmi tulya rahila hrdaya
hāya hāya āra kabe bhajiba se hari*

I took shelter of you nearly fifty years ago, but since then I have only made a pretense of engaging in bhajan. My heart remains as dry and arid as a desert. Alas, alas, when will I finally worship the Lord with sincerity?

30

*tri-saptati-varṣa haila vayah-krame mora
ekhano nā haya jadi nāme raga-leśa /
tabe jāni nāhi kāṭe aparādha ghorā
adrṣte āchaye bujhi durgati aśeṣe*

I am now seventy-three years old and I still have no affection for chanting the Holy Name. Thus, I can understand that I have committed terrible offenses. I realize that I am suffering as a result of the fate that comes as the consequence.

31

*(prabhu go) keñde keñde oṭhe prāṇa nāhi śānti pāi
kṛpā kari dāo sthāna abhaya-caraṇe /
tomā vinā asamayera bandhu keha nāi
o pada bharasā mora jīvane maraṇe*

O my master! My heart cries out to you, for I have no peace. Please give me a place at your lotus feet. Without you, I have no friend in my time of need. Your service is my hope in life and death.

32

*aprakaṭeo prakaṭa tumi cira-kāla
antarera vyathā tāi nivedi tomāre /*

*sahite nāro to santānera cakṣu-jala
doṣa kṣami o caraṇe rākha dayā kare*

Even after your disappearance from this world, you are always present. So I am telling you of the pain that I feel within me. You cannot stand to see all your children's tears, so please give me a place by your side, forgiving me of all my faults.

33

*prakaṭa-kāle o snehe hai ni vañcita
ajñāna adhama jāni kariyācho dayā /
ekhano jānaha prabho tomāri āśrita
māgiche kātare tava śrī-caraṇa-chāyā*

When you were with us, you never held back your affection for me. Even though I am ignorant and lowly, you did not hesitate to show your compassion to me. Even now, I am still under your shelter alone and beg to remain in the cooling shade of your lotus feet.

34

*(śrī) rūpa-pada-dhuli jena janme janme hai
baliyā kata-i dainya karecha prārthanā /
śiṣyero svarūpa prabho jānāyecho sei
anya kāmya nāhi rūpa-ānugatya vinā*

You yourself humbly prayed to remain a speck of dust at Sri Rupa Goswami's lotus feet. By so doing, you taught us about the true identity of your disciples as well. There is nothing more desirable than to follow in the path of Rupa Goswami.

35

ei kṛpā kara prabho ohe dayāmaya

*rūpa-raghunātha-pade jena thāke mati /
lakṣa-nāma japa tava upadeśa haya
sadā jena sei nāma-jape bāre rati*

O most merciful master! Bless us that we too may always remain fixed at the feet of Sri Rupa and Raghunath. You instructed us to chant a lakh of Holy Names every day, so I pray that I may always have the enthusiasm to do my japa according to this command.

36

*āśrayānugatye sabe miliyā mišiyā
rūpa-raghunātha-vāṇī karite pracāra /
antimecchā jānāyechaa kātara haiyā
kr̥pā kari dāo śakti tāhā pālibāra*

In great anxiety, you told us your last wish: that we remain united in the service of the āśraya-vigraha, the devotees from the spiritual master up to Radharani, and preach the message of Sri Rupa and Raghunath. Please give us the strength to fulfill this command.

37

*bhaktivinoda dhārā ruddha nāhi habe
tāñra manobhīṣṭa sabe sādha sābadhāne /
ei icchā tava prabho apūrṇa nā rabe
gāhibe tāñhāra jaya sakala bhuvane*

You also said that the stream of devotion coming from Bhaktivinoda Thakur shall never be dammed up and that we should dedicate ourselves to realizing his mission. O Master! This desire will not go unfulfilled; the entire world will sing his victory!

38

*tava śiṣya gaṇa madhye āmi to adhama
mo-sama ayogya hata-bhāgya keha nāi /
sarvato-bhāvete tāi kṛpā-pātra tava
jāni more śrī-carane deha cira-ṭhāñi*

I am the least amongst your disciples; there is no one as unworthy or unfortunate as myself. As a result, please consider me entirely deserving of your mercy and give me a permanent place at your lotus feet.

39

*lupta-tīrthoddhāra, bhakti-śāstra prakāśana
śrī-mūrtira sevā, vaiṣṇavācāra pracāra /
saba kailā jāhe sampradāya-saṁrakṣaṇa
sadācārya-varya tumi pūjya sabākāra*

You are the most worshipable example of what an acharya should be, preserving the teachings of the disciplic succession in reestablishing the holy places, publishing devotional literature, establishing the worship of the deities and preaching the standards of pure and saintly behavior.

40

*svayam̄ sevyā kṛṣṇa dhari sevaka mūrati
āpani ācari sevā jīvere śikhān /
tāi jāni tumi kṛṣṇa-priyatama ati
bhṛtya-bhṛtya bali pada-tale deha sthāna*

The Supreme Lord Krishna takes the form of a servant, teaching the conditioned souls by his own example. You know this and so you are dearest to Krishna; and therefore I pray that you consider me the servant of your servants and give me a place at your lotus feet.

41

*śrī rādhā-nayana-maṇi kṛṣṇa-dāsa rūpe
ātmā-paricaya dāne tomāra ullāsa /
tava dāsa-dāsa yogya kari laha more
sevā adhikāra diyā rākha nija-pāśa*

You joyfully revealed that you are the servant of Krishna, the cynosure of Radharani's eyes—Nayanamani. Please make me worthy to be the servant of your servant and, giving me the right to serve the Divine Couple, keep me always by your side. Take me by the hand and lead me on the right path, so that I may find my way to Vrindavan. You are most merciful; you are the friend of the destitute, the purifier of the sinful. Never leave this lowly creature.

42

*śaraṇa lainu tava carāṇa-kamale
e dāsere kara dayā āpanāra bale*

I have taken shelter at your lotus feet. Now I ask you to bless me and call me your own.

43

bhavadīya cira-dāsānudāsa sri-bhakti-pramoda-purī

The servant of your servant, Sri Bhakti Promode Puri

Remembering Our Guru Through Bhajan

Scripture says *ājñā gurūṇāṁ hy avicāraṇīyā*—“The orders of the spiritual master

are not to be debated.” The extent to which a disciple follows this instruction or advice is what defines his right to call himself a disciple. The efforts of a person who does not have an absolute commitment to this principle, but who seeks his own profit, adoration or prestige while offering lip service to it, is not a true disciple. Affection for the guru’s lotus feet increases proportionately to the effort the disciple makes to follow his directions. And in proportion to the pleasure the spiritual master feels at his disciple’s efforts, the disciple will feel the pain of divine separation in increasing amounts. This is the good fortune that comes from the spiritual master’s blessings; what is more, the mercy of Krishna also follows the blessings of the spiritual master. When the sun has gone beyond the horizon of this whirling globe of matter called the earth, we say that it has set, knowing full well that it continues to blaze brightly beyond the range of our vision and that it will rise again. Krishna is the divine sun that never sets, the eternal self-effulgent truth. When He, out of His boundless mercy, decides to appear in this world in a way perceptible to humanity, taking birth and living a human life, then that is called His “visible” or prakaṭa manifestation. And when He decides to wind up His earthly pastimes and disappear from the vision of the world, we call this period of being unmanifest—aprakaṭa-kāla. The fact of the matter is that whether He is visible to us or not, He continues to exist eternally and uninterruptedly. The Lord’s pastimes in His eternal abode of Goloka or Vraja Dham know no interruption, for the Supreme Lord is eternally in play. The Sun rides through the sky on his chariot pulled by celestial horses and driven by the godly charioteer, Aruna, appearing over one continent after another; just as he disappears from one continent, he appears in another and goes through the phases of the day there.

Similarly, the lord of all the unlimited universes, Sri Krishna, always accompanied by His entourage of loving associates, enacts His lifetime of being born, engaging in various pastimes in His three homes of Vraja, Mathura and Dvaraka such as the Rasa-lila, killing the demon Kamsa, and marrying Rukmini and the other queens. But when all these wonderful events come to an end in this universe, they simply start up in another, somewhere else. So just as the differing phases of the sun are simply based on perception and do not affect the sun itself, Krishna’s human-like changes and differing pastimes in this world are to be recognized as appearance only. Nevertheless, Krishna’s pastimes are not illusory, but eternally true. This is what makes them extraordinary. Krishna is the supreme truth in human form (narākṛti param brahma) and the Bhagavata speaks of His pastimes as atimartyāṇi karmāṇi (SB 1.1.20)—“superhuman actions.” The Bhagavata (1.3.35) also says:

evam janmāni karmāṇi hy akartur ajanasya ca varṇayanti sma kavayo veda-guhyāṇi hṛt-pateḥ

“Learned men thus describe the births and activities of the unborn and inactive Lord of the heart, though they are hidden in even the Vedic literatures.” (SB 1.3.35)

The words “hidden in even the Vedic literatures” (*veda-guhyāni*) means not only that the Lord’s activities are confidential, but that they are supremely relishable. The Lord Himself furthermore announces in the Gita that His birth and activities are beyond material limitations: *janma karma ca me divyam* (Gita 4.9). The ignorant materialist, being bewildered by the illusory energy, compares Krishna to himself. He therefore thinks that Krishna, the divine truth, the transcendental Cupid who mesmerizes the worldly gods of desire with His beauty, is an ordinary man under the influence of the same material energy and a slave to His lusts. The fact is that although Krishna appears in this world, He is never associated with its dualities like happiness and distress. This is what is meant by the mastery of the supreme master (*īśanam īśasya*—SB 1.11.38). The Lord is unaffected by the qualities of the material energy because He is beyond the material nature:

harir hi nirgunaḥ sākṣat puruṣaḥ prakṛteḥ parah (SB 10.88.5).

In the same way that the Supreme Lord is beyond the perception of the material senses or *adhokṣaja*, being transcendental, immaterial, and eternal, the spiritual master belongs to the same transcendental, eternal, immaterial principle, for being the representative of the Lord, he is not different from Him. So though he may currently be invisible to our eyes, he is in fact eternally present; his pastimes are always *prakaṭa*. The only problem is that our eyes are currently blinded by the dust blown into them by the desire for material sense gratification and so we are unable to experience his presence. The relation with the spiritual master does not come to an end with death. He is our lord and master birth after birth. Just as a surrendered devotee does not take a single step without remembering that Krishna keeps and protects him, the surrendered disciple similarly always thinks of the guru as his protector and maintainer in every situation. Since Rupa Goswami stresses that taking shelter of the spiritual master is the beginning of devotional practice (*ādau guru-pādāśrayaḥ*—BRS 1.2.74), if we can think of the spiritual master in those terms, then we can rest assured that Krishna will indeed protect and maintain us.

On the other hand, if we neglect the guru, then we may call out Krishna’s name for eternal time without His ever becoming merciful to us. This is why the Śruti-s say:

*yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā deve tathā gurau tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ
prakāśante mahātmanah*

“All the truths found in the scriptures spoken by Krishna and His devotees are revealed to the great soul who has the highest devotion for both the Supreme Lord and the spiritual master in equal degree.” (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.23)

We should not imagine that we can even devote ourselves to the Supreme Lord a little more than we do to the spiritual master. This speculation about the relative worth of devotional objects is not condoned or approved by these words of the scripture: *yathā deve tathā gurau*—“as to the Lord, so to the spiritual master.”

Furthermore, such devotion is not restricted by time—it is to be carried on after the spiritual master’s disappearance from this world just as it was during his presence in it. The conclusion is that we should expect to be forever deprived of the Supreme Lord’s blessings if we let up even slightly in our adherence to the spiritual master’s instructions. When the spiritual master leaves the world, the Lord’s eternal associates give him the title *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa*, meaning that he has gone to join them in the eternal abode. By this we should understand that if we in any way disregard this eternal associate of the Lord, especially when we remember that in the form of Nayanamani Manjari, he is directly engaged in the service of Srimati Radharani, the focus of all Krishna’s love, then we should not expect the Divine Couple to take any of our efforts to display affection for them seriously. If Krishna gets angry with someone, then the spiritual master can intervene and pacify Him. On the other hand, the Lord does not care the slightest for someone who shows disrespect to the spiritual master. We should remember the way that the Lord Himself praised service of the guru to His devotee, Sudama.

Service to the spiritual master—*guru-sūsrūṣā*—means attempting to fulfill the spiritual master’s desires, just as Rupa Goswami fulfilled the desires of Sri Chaitanya. Just by wishing to fulfill his desires, Ramanuja caused the three crooked fingers of his spiritual master Yamunacharya’s hand to straighten out. Such is the power of the desire to serve the guru.^{1[8]} Srila Prabhupada set the standard both in adhering to the principles of *nāmabhajana* and in preaching. As far as bhajan is concerned, he unfailingly chanted 100,000 Holy Names every single day. But on the strength of such practice, he engaged in preaching; this was the standard that he expected of his disciples and can therefore be considered his *mano’bhīṣṭa*, or heart’s desire. It is no credit to our spiritual master’s true glories if we remain indifferent to this issue and simply engage in easily observable activities like deity worship, hoping to make a name for ourselves.

Our most worshipable Srila Prabhupada never said that deity worship was the ultimate devotional activity nor that the other aspects of devotional service were epitomized by the activity of arcana. Rather, he said the following: “The worship

of the deity is generally in the category of worship in awe and reverence. The consciousness that one has is of offering respect with various elements to the worshipable Lord in the consciousness of his having materialised a form. Even though devotees engaged in the rāgānugā path may have dimmed the harsh sunlight of awe and reverence, no one can deny that it bears no comparison to the superiority of the cooling moon-rays of the mood of divine sweetness...

Deity worship is never quite free of bodily consciousness, whether it is that of the gross or subtle identification. In the world of genuine bhajan, the practitioner engages in direct service to the Supreme Lord in a spiritual body. Being entirely free of any material identifications, all the senses of the truly devoted practitioner of bhajan are perceived as being non-material; they are engaged as in a service state beyond the mental platform and beyond time due to proximity with the non-dual supreme substance.” At the same time, those who are unable to understand the distinction being made by Prabhupada in the above paragraph generally commit offenses to the Lord’s deity form by considering it to be an idol: this is a hellish understanding, as stated by none other than Vyasaadeva himself:

arcye viṣṇau śilādhīr yasya nārakī saḥ.

So we must also pay special attention to not offending the deities. All the different forms of devotional service are achieved through the chanting of the Holy Names (*nava-vidhā bhakti pūrṇa nāma haite haya*). Srila Jiva Goswami has also stated that though other types of devotional activities are ordained in the age of Kali, they should be executed in the accompaniment of chanting:

yadyapy anyā bhaktih kalau kartavyā tadā kīrtanākhyā-bhakti-samyogena.

The offenses listed in the Padma-purāṇa include thinking of the deity to be nothing more than stone, the spiritual master as a mortal human being, to judge a Vaishnava by his caste or race, to think of the Ganges or the water that has washed the deity’s or the Vaishnava’s feet to be ordinary water, the names of the Lord to be mundane sounds or the Supreme Lord Vishnu on an equal level with the other demigods like Brahma or Shiva. Anyone who succumbs to these offensive ideas eventually sinks down to hellish life, so everyone should take care to avoid them.

To think of the spiritual master as an ordinary mortal is called gurv-avajñā and is a very destructive offense. The Supreme Lord is beyond the perception of the material senses; He is thus called adhokṣaja. The spiritual master is similarly adhokṣaja, meaning that he can never be bewildered nor touched by the material senses objects. Narottama Das demonstrated the way to pay respect to the spiritual master in the beginning of his Prema-bhakti-candrikā. He calls the

spiritual master's feet the abode of pure devotion. There is absolutely no way to cross over the material ocean without the pleasure and blessings of the spiritual master.

Thakur Bhaktivinoda sings:

guru-kṛpā-jale nāśi viṣaya-anala rādhā-govinda bala rādhā-govinda bala

“Extinguish the fire of sense-gratification with the water of the spiritual master’s mercy. Sing the names of Radha and Govinda! Sing the names of Radha and Govinda!”

Visvanath Chakravarti Thakur begins his famous prayer to the spiritual master with a similar metaphor, saying that the lotus feet of the spiritual master take on the characteristics of a rain cloud that puts out the blazing forest fire of material life with its showers of compassion. The spiritual master is often called an ocean of mercy; he suffers on seeing the sufferings of others. He distils the essence of the scriptures and gives it to the fallen conditioned souls. If he had not turned so many fallen souls like myself back from the path of sense gratification to that of pure devotional service, who knows to what depths we would have fallen? In his *Anubhāṣya* to *Chaitanya Charitamrita* (1.4.21), Srila Prabhupada writes the following: “In the *Chaitanya Charitamrita* we read not only about bhakti and śuddha-bhakti, but also about biddha-bhakti, or blemished devotion. Thus, there are three types of devotion that need to be taken into consideration. Blemished devotion is that which still contains elements of other desires, is covered by other practices such as *jñāna* and karma, and cultivation of a consciousness of things other than Krishna, while dressing it all up as service to Krishna.

Biddha-bhakti includes devotion that is mixed with fruitive activities, the intellectual approach to spiritual emancipation, with yoga or with various rituals having sense gratification as a goal. In other words, it contains activities that cannot be considered pure devotion. Service that is not blemished in this way, but follows the regulations of devotional service (*vaidhī bhakti*) is still considered devotion. It is completely distinct from *viddhā bhakti* and is filled with activities that are intended for the pleasure of the Supreme Lord. Pure devotion is the name given to service done with deep desire following the mood of the eternally perfected associates of the Lord in Vrindavan; such service is not inspired by scriptural injunctions, but by spontaneous desire. So *vaidhī bhakti* is not mixed with other desires and is thus helpful to attaining pure devotion; however, when we speak of pure devotion, we mean *rāgānugā bhakti*. Such pure devotion is the highest degree of devotional practice, being characteristic of Krishna’s abode of Goloka. The other type of devotion, which has regulative principles as its basis, is found in Vaikuntha. One is spontaneous, loving and personal; the other, cautious, respectful and bound by etiquette.”

Krishna Das Kaviraj Goswami writes:

vrajera nirmala rāga śuni bhakta-gaṇa rāga-mārge bhaje jena chāri dharma-karma

“When the devotees hear about the pure devotion of the people of Vraja, then they worship on the rāgānugā path, giving up all varieties of religious duty.” (CC 1.4.33)

He then goes on to quote the Srimad Bhagavatam (10.33.36):

anugrahāya bhaktānāṁ mānuṣīṁ tanum āśritaḥ bhajate tādrśīḥ krīḍā yāḥ śrutvā tat-paro bhavet

“The Supreme Lord Sri Krishna manifests Goloka’s rāsa-līlā in the material world in order to show His mercy to the devotees and all the creatures of the world. Anyone who hears of these wonderful pastimes will immediately engage in the Lord’s devotional service.” The juxtaposition of these verses makes it seem that a pure devotee who has perfected the preliminary practices (sādhanā) of devotional service is eligible to listen to the divine pastimes of the rasa-līlā. Srila Prabhupada clarifies this point in his Anubhāṣya, “The activities of the Lord within the material universe are not within the grasp of the Prakrita Sahajiyas. Because they have been set into motion by the Lord’s internal potency or Yoga Maya, Krishna’s extraordinary pastimes such as the rāsa-līlā are not properly understood according to material standards. The Sahajiya school considers these activities to fall within the category of material sense gratification. They distort the meaning of phrases like tat-paratvena nirmalam or tat-paro bhavet as it appears in this verse, projecting their corrupt mental conception onto the divine pastime. Swallowed up by ignorance, those who are averse to the service of the Lord reject the transcendental nature of the Lord’s acts and view them with empirical eyes.

They become completely absorbed by their desire for sense gratification, and thus distort the meaning of this verse. Those who confuse the state of perfection with that of practice become Prakrita Sahajiyas. One should not base the interpretation of this verse on the optative form of the verb bhavet, concluding that this statement gives license to even the sense gratifier without respect to possessing the requisite qualifications. In this material world there is a question of duty and prohibition. Such regulations cannot possibly exist in Goloka Vrindavan. In that world, the passionate devotees of the Lord are governed by their greed for service and naturally find love for Krishna in everything.”

The transcendental residents of Vraja possess a natural and overwhelming absorption or passion for their service to Krishna. This passion is known as rāga;

devotional service characterized by this mood is called rāgātmikā bhakti. The devotional service of a practitioner who aspires to this mood is known as rāgānugā bhakti. It is said that one becomes eligible for rāgānugā bhakti when he or she hears about the sweetness of the mood of Vraja residents' spontaneous service and becomes eager to have it. A dependence on scriptural injunctions or logical arguments does not characterize one who is so eligible. Rāgānugā bhakti is practiced on two levels: in the body of a sadhaka who is free from the anarthas, and in the spiritual body or siddha-deha.

*bāhya antara ihāra dui ta sādhana bāhye sādhaka-dehe kare śravaṇa-kīrtana
mane nija-siddha-deha kariyā bhāvana rātri-dine kare vraje kṛṣṇera sevana*

“Rāgānugā bhakti is practiced both externally and internally. In the external body, he acts as any other practitioner of devotional service and engages in hearing and chanting. In his mind, however, the devotee meditates on his spiritual body and serves Krishna there in Vrindavan, day and night.” (CC 2.22.151-2)

*sevā sādhaka-rūpeṇa siddha-rūpeṇa cātra hi tad-bhāva-lipsunā kāryā vraja-
lokānusārataḥ*

“The devotee desiring intensely to attain the rāgātmikā mood of one or the other Vrajavasi associates of Krishna should engage in the practices of devotional service in his external body as a practitioner and internally in his spiritual body, in both cases following in the footsteps of the residents of Vraja.” (BRS 1.2.295; CC 2.22.153)

nijābhīṣṭa kṛṣṇa-preṣṭha pācheta lāgiyā nirantara sevā kare antarmanā hañā

“In his mind, he constantly serves Krishna while adhering closely to his favorite devotee, one who is most dear to the Lord.” (CC 2.22.154)

*kṛṣṇam smaran janam cāsyā preṣṭham nija-samīhitam tat-tat-kathā-rataś cāsau
kuryād vāsam vraje sadā*

“Remembering Krishna and one of His dearest and closest devotees, one should constantly remain absorbed in hearing about their loving relations. In this way, one should make one's permanent residence in Vraja.” (BRS 1.2.294, CC 2.22.155)

ei mata kare jebā rāgānugā bhakti kṛṣṇera caraṇe tāṅra upajaya prīti

“Whoever practices rāgānugā bhakti in this way develops love for Krishna's lotus feet.” (CC 2.22.160)

Srila Prabhupada writes in his commentary to this verse: “One who engages in service in the sādhaka-deha, by which is meant repeating or chanting the teachings he has heard or the service of kirtan, and also constantly meditates on serving Radha and Krishna in a spiritual body that is appropriate to such a purpose will attain an intense kind of love for the Lord through this transcendental greed. The first awakening of love as achieved through the rāgānugā path enchants Sri Krishna and this ultimately ends in one attaining loving service to Him.” One develops the capacity to relish the tastes of the transcendental realm, its ever fresh, eternally life-giving ecstasies, by first transcending the material mental platform and rising to the effulgent platform of pure goodness. According to the teaching of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the practitioner who takes shelter of the Holy Names will be freed from all unwanted habits and tendencies, after which it is easy to enter the path of *rāgānugā* bhakti.

In his commentary on the *Śikṣāṣṭaka*, Srila Prabhupada wrote: “The sixty-four activities of devotional service are assessed according to the division of vaidhī or rāgānugā bhakti. Prahlad’s definition of pure devotional service is found in the Bhagavatam. Mahaprabhu stated unequivocally that the chanting of the Holy Names is the best of all devotional practices.” All perfections will come to us through the chanting of the Holy Name: *ihā haite sarva-siddhi haibe sabāra*. The Holy Name mercifully bestows the ability to progressively relish Krishna’s name, His form, His attributes, His associates and finally, His sweet pastimes.

Without the mercy of the Holy Name, we cannot taste these spiritual experiences.

*īśat vikaśi punah dekhāya nija-rūpa-guṇa citta hari laya kṛṣṇa pāśa pūrṇa
vikaśita hañā vraje more jāya lañā dekhāya nija svarūpa vilāsa*

“When the Name is even slightly revealed, it shows me my own spiritual form and characteristics. It steals my mind and takes it to Krishna’s side. When the Name is fully revealed, it takes me directly to Vraja, where it shows me my personal role in the eternal pastimes.” (*Kṛṣṇa-nāma dhare kata bala? Śaraṇāgati*)

Those unfaithful people who disbelieve the scriptures and commit offenses to the Holy Name never allow prema to enter their lives. Those who are free from the stupidity of atheism are known as wise and learned, or dhīra. The blessings of the Holy Name are so powerful that when such a wise and learned person hears about such pastimes as Krishna’s rāsa-līlā from his spiritual master, which even Narayan’s consort Lakshmi Devi is unable to comprehend, then he quickly obtains the ability to chant constantly himself and, eventually, attains the love of

God that destroys any vestiges of material desire that remain in his heart. Krishna's pastimes with the gopis are incomprehensible to someone who depends on scriptural injunctions and logical arguments to engage in devotional service; one has to follow the transcendental path of the gopis themselves. These are the indications found in the Bhagavata in the verse beginning with *vikṛīditam vraja-vadhūbhir idam ca viṣṇoh* (10.33.42).

The most merciful and worshipable Srila Prabhupada was so kind that he advised conditioned souls like ourselves, whose hearts are filled with all kinds of unwanted desires, to avoid prematurely getting involved in discussing such topics and to simply throw ourselves at the mercy of the Holy Name. The idea is that one should harbor the powerful desire to attain that goal (on the theory that one attains the perfection one seeks—*yādṛśī bhāvanā yasya siddhir bhavati tādṛśī*) and chant the Holy Name according to the spiritual master's instruction. If we cannot follow Srila Prabhupada's instruction to chant 100,000 Names every single day without offenses, even a fourth of that amount has a positive affect and quiets the mind.

And yet there are those who do not even chant that amount and still think that they can engage in discussions of the Lord's divine pastimes in the hope of being able to relish them. This is pure arrogance! In the meantime, my life is slowly being wasted. The sun of my life is on the point of setting. My hand trembles and I find it difficult to hold a pen to write and my memory is beginning to fail me.

It makes me think of the Bengali verse:

*vrddha-kāla āola sab sukha bhāgala pīrā-vaśe hainu kātara sarvendriya
durbala kṣīṇa kalevara bhogābhāve duḥkhita antara*

"Old age has come and all joy has left. I have become subject to all kinds of ailments. My body is waning and my senses are weak. The worst thing is that I am saddened by my inability to enjoy sense gratification."

O Srila Prabhupada, you are the true shelter of those who know no other resort. For someone as worthless as me, there is no salvation other than your causeless mercy. You instructed me privately in the mantra, told me to chant the Holy Names without offenses, and to keep my mantra secret—but I have not been able to follow these instructions properly. There is no puraścaraṇa other than service to the spiritual master; without such service, there can be no perfection of the mantra, the deity of the mantra does not give his blessing or reveal Himself. Without having properly served my spiritual master and thus developed the power of the mantra, I have initiated so many unqualified people and thus

committed offenses.

One day in Puri Dham, Gadadhar Pandit Goswami himself warned us about this by asking Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to reinitiate him. He said to the Lord, “Ever since I revealed my mantra to someone I have been unable to properly concentrate on it any more. If You repeat the mantra to me, my mind will be calmed again.” The Lord answered him, “If I were to do this, you would become an offender to your initiating spiritual master, so be careful. This has nothing to do with my affection for you. I would not only give you a mantra, but would give you My life, but it is considered inappropriate to act in this way as long as your spiritual master is alive.” Gadadhar suggested, “My spiritual master is not present here. Can you not act in his place?” The Lord answered, “Your guru, Pundarika Vidyanidhi, will soon arrive in Puri. When he does, he will do as you have asked.” (CBh 3.10.23-28) Within ten days, Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu’s omniscience was proved when Pundarika Vidyanidhi arrived in Puri Dham and Gadadhar’s desire was fulfilled by hearing the mantra a second time from his guru. (CC 3.10.79)

In this connection, Srila Prabhupada commented: “The mantra is the sound representation of the Param Brahma that is received for the purpose of overcoming the contemplation of sense gratification. Whenever a spiritual master instructs a disciple in the mantra, he is affected by a degree of contamination entering in him. If one’s state of spiritual realization (divya-jñāna) is weakened through association with materialistic persons, then one must make every effort to revive that position. Gadadhar Pandit was aware of this and so he asked Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to repeat the mantra to him. Mahaprabhu, however, deemed that Gadadhar should go to his spiritual master, Pundarika Vidyanidhi.” (Gauḍīya-bhāṣya to Chaitanya Bhāgavata 3.10.24)

kṛṣṇa āmāya pāle rākhe jāne sarva-kāla ātma-nivedana-dainye ghucāya jañjāla

“A surrendered devotee knows that Krishna protects him at all times. By giving himself to Krishna in humility, he is free from all life’s difficulties.” The spiritual master is also the manifestation of Krishna Himself, and so he too acts as the protector and maintainer of his disciple. I therefore pray to my spiritual master that I may always think of him as my worshipable deity, and that by his grace I may always worship the fearless, ambrosial feet of Sri GuruGauranga-Gandharvika-Giridhari.

O Gurudeva! Do not deprive me of your mercy! Protect and maintain me always; free me of all impurities; forgive all my offenses and any mistakes or errors I have made. Give this most unfortunate soul a permanent place at your lotus feet. Make me the servant of your servants. Give me the capacity to serve you and make this life of mine successful.

On the day before you departed from this world, you made me so fortunate by placing your lotus feet on my chest. May those feet, as cooling as a million moons, remain there eternally. May I worship them always in my heart. Though I am completely unworthy, I beg of you that you bestow this causeless mercy on me.

*yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto’pi dhyāyan
stuvāṁs tasya yaśas trisandhyam vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

“I worship the lotus feet of my spiritual master, meditating and glorifying them thrice daily, for through his blessings we receive the blessings of the Lord, but without his blessings we are without hope.” (Gurvaṣṭaka 8)

About the Author

On the early years of this century, Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur set into motion a devotional revival that rapidly spread through Bengal, India, and eventually the world. He put into question the very foundations of present-day theistic thought in a way that has little comparison anywhere in the spiritual record, East or West. Through him, the world was awakened to the teachings of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and the movement of pure devotion, śuddhā bhakti.

In orchestrating this modern bhakti revolution, Srila Prabhupada gathered some of the greatest spiritual luminaries in contemporary history into his circle. Such a convergence of exalted spiritual personalities can only be compared to the coming together of Sri Chaitanya’s direct followers in the sixteenth century. One of the devotional giants who entered Srila Prabhupada’s orbit was the author of this book, His Divine Grace Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Maharaj. We cannot describe the life of Srila Puri Goswami Maharaj without emphasizing his contribution to the spiritual movement in which he was so integrally involved. The depth of his accomplishments cannot be fathomed outside the context of Sri Gaudiya Math. With his fellow godbrothers, he shared an indomitable faith in the service of his Guru and the message of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. This service was the sole purpose and highest aspiration of his being. This conviction led him to spend his entire life in the pursuit of Srila Prabhupada and Mahaprabhu’s pleasure and the fulfillment of their desires. If we examine his life in this setting, we will see more than just numbers, dates, places and names. We

will see how he embodied the very life current that his spiritual preceptors came to give the world.

Srila Puri Goswami Maharaj took birth in the village of Ganganandapur in Jessore district (in present-day Bangla Desh), on October 8, 1898. His parents, Tarini Charan Chakravarti and Srimati Ram Rangini Devi, named him Sri Promode Bhushan Chakravarti. During his childhood, he met his vartmapradarśaka guru (“one who opens the door to the path of devotion”), Srila Bhakti Ratna Thakur, a godbrother and siksha disciple of Thakur Bhaktivinoda, the legendary architect of the present Gaudiya Vaishnava movement. Through Bhakti Ratna Thakur he was introduced to Sajjana-toṣṇī, Bhaktivinoda Thakur’s own Vaishnava periodical, which was filled with Bhaktivinoda’s commentaries and holy teachings. In this way Srila Puri Maharaj became familiar with the seminal works of the śuddhā bhakti tradition, such as Chaitanya Charitamrita, Chaitanya Bhagavata and the Srimad Bhagavatam. It was also through Bhakti Ratna Thakur that he first learned of his future guru, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Prabhupada.

Srila Puri Maharaj was still a young university student when he first came before Srila Prabhupada at the Yoga Pith in Sri Mayapur in 1915. It was a significant occasion, for Srila Prabhupada’s diksha guru, Paramahamsa Thakur Srimad Gaura Kishor Das Babaji, had entered his eternal abode only the day before. Srila Puri Maharaj often recounted that as soon as he saw Srila Prabhupada and paid his obeisances to him for the first time, he knew in his heart that this was his spiritual master. Some years later, on the auspicious day of Sri Krishna Janmastami in 1923, he accepted both Harinam and mantra diksha from Srila Prabhupada and was given the name Pranavananda Brahmachari. At the time, Sri Gaudiya Math was rapidly establishing itself as a bona fide manifestation of Indian religious culture and transforming the caste-conscious socio-religious world of Hinduism. Srila Prabhupada Saraswati Thakur was bringing together his intimate associates to share the wealth of Sri Krishna sankirtan. He had accepted tridaṇḍī sannyāsa in 1918 and by the early 1920’s had already assumed a formidable position in the Bengali spiritual firmament. He was fearless when it came to upholding true religious principles. The students and practitioners of the Gaudiya Math aligned themselves with this attitude and led most exemplary lives of devotion, imbued with austerity, discipline and in-depth scriptural learning. This high standard of religious life was the hallmark of Sri Gaudiya Math and would be the thread that guided all of Srila Prabhupada’s disciples, including Srimad Puri Goswami Maharaj.

The keystone of success in devotion is to perfectly hear the holy words spoken by one’s spiritual preceptor. Srila Prabhupada would often say, “All that is required of you is that you lend me your ears.” Srila Puri Maharaj was fully

committed to this maxim. He had the great good fortune to associate closely with Srila Prabhupada for thirteen years and during that time he served him personally by recording his lectures and conversations, which were later published. The greater part of Srila Prabhupada's spoken words we are left with today come from the transcriptions of these notes. At the same time, Srila Puri Maharaj cultivated a deep knowledge of the Vaishnava scriptures, with the result that he became a veritable storehouse of the wealth of the preceptorial line coming from Sri Chaitanya and his followers.

This led him to become one of the most prolific writers and influential teachers in all of Gaudiya Vaishnava history. His writings reflect the disciplined eye of a scholar who expresses with grace and directness the purest scriptural conclusions supported by his own uncommonly profound realization. Following Srila Prabhupada's directives, our Gurudeva edited, wrote for, published and helped distribute countless spiritual publications. He was initially inspired and directed by Srila Prabhupada to start writing and contributing articles to the *Gauḍīya* magazine, the backbone of the Gaudiya Math's missionary work. For seven years he served as a proofreader and as one of its primary editors.

In 1926, he was charged with running the world's only daily Vaishnava newspaper, *Dainika Nadiyā Prakāśa*. He held this service for two years, publishing all of his preceptor's daily discourses along with articles by fellow students and other contemporaries. His service and learning did not pass unnoticed by Srila Prabhupada who awarded him the titles of *mahā-mahopadeśaka* ("great instructor") and *pratna-vidyālankāra* ("keeper of the wisdom of the ancient scriptural lore").

After the disappearance of his Gurudeva in 1937, Srila Puri Maharaj continued his vocation of spreading the teachings of Sri Chaitanya through the *Gauḍīya* magazine, first out of the Bagh Bazaar Gaudiya Math and then later the Sri Chaitanya Math in Mayapur. After he founded the Sri Chaitanya Gaudiya Math, Srila Puri Goswami Maharaj's godbrother, Srimad Bhakti Dayita Madhava Maharaj, invited him to head the editorial board of *Chaitanya Vāṇī* magazine in 1964. Puri Maharaj served in this capacity for thirty-three years, furthering his life's work of preserving the teachings of his spiritual lineage. Through *Chaitanya Vāṇī*, he continued to make a deep impact on the devotional world. In all, our venerable teacher's wisdom is embodied in over sixty years of writings on Vaishnava philosophy and theology.

He penned a rich variety of texts, bringing the Bhagavata dharma to life through hundreds of poems, essays, narratives, diaries, editorials and personal letters, thus creating a storehouse of the wealth of pure devotion for his disciples and the world at large.

In 1942, Srila Prabhupada appeared to Srila Puri Maharaj in a dream vision and imparted to him the sannyas mantra, ordering him to accept the renounced order. After accepting tridaṇḍī-sannyāsa from his godbrother Bhakti Gaurava Vaikhanasa Maharaj in Champahati in August of 1946, he toured parts of India with other godbrothers such as Bhakti Hridoy Bon Maharaj and Bhakti Dayita Madhava Maharaj. In the meantime, he continued to write and lecture with dedication. At the behest of his godbrother Tridandi Swami Bhakti Vilasa Tirtha Maharaj, he also served for seven years as chief pujari for the Yoga Pith temple, the birthsite of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Srila Puri Maharaj took up a more solitary life of worship in the 1950's. He moved to a humble cottage on the banks of the Ganges in Ambika Kalna. The king of Burdwan was extremely impressed by his saintly ascetic character and, on the appearance day of Srimati Radharani in 1958, presented him with the ancient Ananta Vasudeva temple in Kalna.

In 1989, at the age of 91, Srila Puri Goswami Maharaj established the Sri Gopinath Gaudiya Math in Ishodyan, Sri Mayapur, for the service of their divine lordships, Sri Sri Gaura-Gadadhar, Jagannath Deva, Radha-Gopinath and Lakshmi-Narasingha Deva. In the following years, he established other temples in Jagannath Puri, Vrindavan, Calcutta and Midnapore. Srila Puri Maharaj taught through his every action. He excelled in all aspects of devotional practice and there was perhaps no area in which he did not exhibit utmost expertise, diligence and foresight. This ranged from his encyclopedic knowledge of scripture, to maintaining the printing press, to his beautiful singing of kirtan.

He was especially recognized for his sensitivity and attention to detail in the performance of deity worship and devotional rites and was thus widely called upon to be the head priest in most of the Gaudiya Math's deity installations and ceremonial functions. He was rarely known to rest; his service was an uninterrupted flow. Even in his later years, he would remain awake, writing and chanting through the night while all his youthful disciples were still asleep. When his personal servants came in the morning, they would inevitably find him awake and chanting the Holy Name, arisen before everyone else in the ashram.

Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Maharaj had outstanding love for his godbrothers and was inspired in his glorification of others. He found richness in everyone he met. He had the quality of making one feel so much wanted and their life so much valued. At the same time, he paid the least attention to himself. He was an emblem of humility and simplicity, and his generosity of spirit and kindness touched the hearts of the whole Vaishnava community.

Among his lifetime, intimate companions were Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Deva Goswami Maharaj, Srila Bhakti Prajnan Keshava Maharaj, and Srila

Akinchan Krishna Das Babaji Maharaj. Toward the end of his sojourn in this world, he was honored by the Gaudiya Vaishnava community for his learning, long life of service and devotion and made president of the World Vaishnava Association in 1995. “He has love for his Guru; and let it be known that his life is one with his words.” This tribute, coming from Srila Prabhupada himself, is the most revealing statement about Srila Puri Goswami Maharaj’s personality and qualities. He gave credit for all of his accomplishments to the mercy of his Gurudeva alone. Through the blessings of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur, Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Maharaj attracted the hearts of so many to the Bhagavata religion.

People from so many different backgrounds and countries found in him a true spiritual guide and shelter. He upheld the principles of pure Vaishnavism and delineated the path of śaraṇāgati. He so embodied pure devotion and service to his spiritual master that one of his disciples once remarked that he was able to “silently lay down Srila Prabhupada’s entire siddhanta.”

We are greatly indebted to His Divine Grace for his gift—a lifetime of pure devotion, spanning over a century, which we can aspire for, learn from, and discuss about for our own spiritual nourishment. Srila Puri Maharaj departed this world for the eternal abode in the predawn hours of Narayan Chaturdasi, October 21, 1999, one day before the Rasa Purnima. His divine body was transported from Jagannath Puri to the Gopinath Gaudiya Math in Ishodyan and there placed in his eternal samadhi shrine. Prior to his departure from this world, Srila Puri Goswami Maharaj appointed his intimate disciple, Sripada Bhakti Bibudha Bodhayan Maharaj as his successor and President-acharya of Sri Gopinath Gaudiya Math.

In years to come as more of his words and vision are translated, the world outside of Bengal and India will come to know the spirit of the true Vaishnava religion that he tirelessly shared. May the gentle rain of nectar of his perfect teachings continue to bring auspiciousness into this world.

[1] *nayana-mañi*, “jewel of the eye,” is also Srila Prabhupada’s internal name. 2 i.e. Friday morning, 5:30 a.m., January 1, 1937.

[2] See *Gauḍīya-kaṇṭha-hāra*, 15.24-43, to find all the references mentioned here.

[3] 1 The Bengali year is given as 1280, Śaka year 1795, the tithi as Māghī Kṛṣṇa pañcamī for Saraswati Thakur’s birth, and Kṛṣṇā caturthī of Pauṣa, Bengali year 1343, 4 Nārāyaṇa, 450 years after the birth of Sri Chaitanya (Gaurābda), as the day of his disappearance.

[4] 2 The seven-tongued sacrificial fire of the Holy Name refers to the seven perfections attained through proper chanting. They are elaborately discussed in the commentaries on the first verse of Śikṣāṣṭaka by Srila

Bhaktivinoda Thakur (Śrī Sanmodana-bhāṣyam) and Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur. In summary they are: (1) ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam: the mirror of the heart is cleansed of all impurities; (2) bhava-mahādāvāgninirvā-paṇam; one is liberated from the fire of conditioned existence; (3) śreyah-kairava-candrikā-vitaraṇam—one receives the benediction of pure dedication to the lord, which is compared to the flowering of a pristine white lotus, (4) vidyā-vādhū-jivanam—one is awakened in spiritual consciousness and is endowed with transcendental knowledge of his eternal identity; (5) ānandāmbudhi-vardhanam—the Holy Name progressively reveals the nature of divine loving service to the soul, by which she experiences the intrinsic delight of the ever-expanding ocean of devotional sentiment; (6) prati-padam purnāmṛtāsvādanam—intoxicated by the wine of divine love, the soul continuously drinks the endlessly captivating and ambrosial service to the Divine Couple in the five loving moods of service, friendship, parental love, and consorthood; (7) sarvātma-snapanam—all dimensions of the spiritual being are freed from desires extraneous to loving devotional service, including the desire for liberation of any sort.

[5] 3 parama-śreṣṭha-śrī-rādhā-sāṁvalita-līlā-maya-tad-bhajanaṁ tu paramatamam eveti svataḥsidhyati kintu rahasya-līlā tu pauruṣa-vikāravad-indriyaiḥ piṭṛ-putra-dāsa-bhāvaiś ca nopāsyā svīya-bhāva-virodhāt

[6] 1 Named by Srila Prabhupada Avidyāharaṇa nāṭa-mandira, “The kirtan hall that destroys ignorance.” 2 Burma was the scene of anti-Indian demonstrations in 1937 and was separated from the rest of the British Empire in India in the same year. The general anti-Indian sentiment made it difficult for the preaching mission to continue in Rangoon. 3 This is not practiced in the Gaudiya Vaishnava sampradaya. See The Art of Sadhana, 120-122.

[7] 1 The Bhaktivinoda Asan, 1918; Visva Vaishnava Raja Sabha (World Vaishnava Association), 1924; Saraswata Asan, 1924; Gaudiya Sampadaka Sangha (The Gaudiya magazine editorial board), 1925; Nikhila Vaishnava Sammilani, 1927; Pāramārthika ālocanā sammiti, 1933; London Gaudiya Mission Society, 1934; Śrī Vraja-dhāma-pracāriṇī Sabhā, 1935; Anukūla kṛṣṇānuśīlanāgāra, 1936; Daiva-varṇāśrama-saṅgha, 1936.

[8] 1 Yamunacharya was looking for someone capable who could write a commentary on the Vedanta Sutras, presenting the Sri Vaishnava position. He also wanted commentaries to be written on the Tamil Veda and the Bhagavad Gita.